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Early Voting Versus Election Day Voting: Identifying Individual Indicators of Election Stage
Participation in Louisiana Elections, 2015-2016

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Political Science

by

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Dedication

Thank you to the family, friends, and faculty who have encouraged and supported me throughout this process. Most of all, thank you Christie, Cote, and Gordon, for the sacrifices you have made for me to complete this work. I dedicate my work to you.

This research would not have been possible without the contributions of the Louisiana Secretary of State's office and its staff, who provided population datasets of voters in each of the elections that were analyzed. This type of information is available to the public at a cost; however, it was provided for this project at no cost for academic research. Thank you, former Secretary Tom Schedler and Secretary Kyle Ardoin.

Finally, the former Tangipahoa Parish Registrar of Voters, John "Fat Rat" Russell and Chief Deputy Willie Johnson provided in depth information about the registration of voters in Louisiana and the logistics of early voting administration. Thank you for your time, interest, and information for this research.

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Abstract

Does early voting advance the democratic process in achieving political equality? Does it create more equity in the representativeness of an electorate? According to rational choice and economic theory, the expanded opportunity to vote should reduce an individual's cost to vote, thus resulting in higher voter turnouts where traditionally marginalized voters will take advantage of early voting opportunities.

This research conducts an individual-level analysis of more than five-million voter cases over four consecutive Louisiana statewide elections of all individuals who voted in each of the elections from 2015 to 2016. These elections include the 2016 U.S. presidential election, a gubernatorial primary, a gubernatorial runoff, and a U.S. Senate runoff election. It seeks to find individual indicators of a voter's choice between early voting and election day voting and whether or not early voting creates a mobilization effect or a convenience effect in voter turnout in Louisiana elections. Variables employed in the four population datasets are: sex, age, race, and partisan registration. In addition to the four statewide population datasets, a survey of 1,902 voters who voted in the Louisiana 2016 U.S. presidential election was conducted to capture the variables: level of education, household income, marital status, and political party identification. Five binary regression analyses reveal that contrary to rational choice theory, a convenience effect manifests where sex, age, race, party registration, and level of education are all significant indicators in early voting. The best explanation of this phenomena is that political behavior is more complicated than economic behavior.

Keywords: early voting, voter turnout, elections, voting, election day, Louisiana elections, rational choice

Chapter 1

Introduction

The study and research of early voting expansions and interventions is important. Analyzing evidence-based results of underlying theoretical expectations of early voting can reveal if expectations are being realized. Moreover, analysis may discover unintended consequences of such policy implementations. Theoretical expectations are that voters with the lack of resources of time, education, and wealth, are at a disadvantage compared to their counterparts who may find it easier to get to voting polls in a single day election. Theoretically, the expansion of voting opportunities i.e. early voting, should result in a mobilization effect whereby those types of voters who were unable vote in a one-day election scenario should be better represented with opportunities to vote over multiple days, resulting in an electoral representation of the voter population's socio-political demographics.

U.S. states like Louisiana have expanded voting opportunities to include seven days of no-excuse in-person early voting in addition to election day. In 2017 Louisiana introduced no excuse mail-in absentee balloting for voters who are sixty-five and older. Participation in the sixty-five and older mail-in balloting program is initiated by a registered voter's one-time request to have a ballot mailed to them for each and every election in which they are eligible to vote.

On the surface, these early voting expansions and interventions may seem to be progressive at best and benign at worst. But what if there are unintended consequences of the theoretical expectations? What if early voting interventions are exacerbating overrepresentation of some types of voters over others? Consider the sixty-five and older mail-in balloting program in Louisiana for example. If younger voter turnout is customarily lower than older voter turnout, how do we imagine that this type of intervention will resolve the age disparity in turnout rates? Older voters may be wealthier, have had more educational attainment, and have more slack time

to vote and vote early. What if white voters are wealthier, have more opportunities to attain higher levels of education, and have more time to vote and vote early? What if Republicans are wealthier, have more opportunities to attain higher levels of education, and have more slack time to vote and vote early? What if such disparities in electoral participation are actually exacerbated, rather than minimized, by early-voting laws?

If there are types of voters who are predisposed to voting in one-day election scenarios, they may also be inclined to take advantage of additional early voting opportunities, thus creating a convenience effect for their types, resulting in overrepresentation in election turnout.

This dissertation seeks to find the answer to the question of whether early voting expansion opportunities and interventions in Louisiana are having the theoretically expected mobilization effect or an unintended convenience effect.

This research considers whether individual voter characteristics influence participation in early voting versus election day voting in Louisiana. In addition to election stage choice, this research seeks to find whether or not early voting in Louisiana nurtures a mobilization effect or a convenience effect. A mobilization effect would manifest itself in higher participation rates of early voting among those who are generally less likely to vote on election day, particularly minority, less affluent, and less educated voters during the early voting stage. A convenience effect would reveal that white, higher income, and more educated voters are more likely to utilize the early voting stage as an additional opportunity to vote. This would be revealed in the evidence where early voting turnout demographics would be no different than election day demographic turnout rates. Moreover, if early voting demographic turnout shows that whiter, wealthier, and more educated voters turnout in early voting, then expansions of early voting opportunities are not producing the desired intent.

There have been voting reforms for nearly four decades to the United States' election systems toward making voting easier and less expensive for voters, "...it has never been easier for a registered voter in the United States to participate in selecting government officials." say researchers Giammo and Brox (2010). However, there have been efforts to claw back progressive early voting expansions to suppress minority turnout. In North Carolina, a 2013 state law reduced early voting by a week, eliminated same-day registration, and banned voters from attempting to vote outside of their registered precincts on election day. In 2016 the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals wrote that these tactics targeted African-Americans with "surgical precision" (NPR, October 17, 2018).

Republicans and Democrats view voter enfranchisement differently, as did the Founding Fathers. Today, Democrats view voting as a right and prefer to increase the franchise by reducing institutional barriers to participation including removing registration requirements such as voter registration and pictured identification. They believe these barriers negatively and disproportionately affect their constituency of electorally underrepresented minorities, less educated, and younger voters. Republicans see voting as a right and privilege, maintaining that voter registration purges and voter identification requirements are minimal costs and are helpful in reducing voter fraud (Keyssar, 2001).

This research does not posit that early voting mobilizes a higher overall turnout, only that a mobilization effect should be evident in demographic measures of traditionally underrepresented types of voters: non-party registrants, minorities, less affluent, and less educated voters during the early voting stage when comparing these categories to their election day counterparts.

Theoretical expectations, based upon extant literature and research, are that historically underperforming categories of election day voters will be more likely to take advantage of early

voting opportunities than do election-day voters. Voting itself is a habit that is learned via political socialization, handed down from one generation to the next. Whites, particularly in the South, have longer voting traditions than do blacks. Men have had many more decades of opportunity to vote than women, but by 1980, sixty years after the Nineteenth amendment prohibited voter discrimination based on sex, women's turnout had caught up to men's turnout, and has since surpassed that of men (McBride and Parry, 2016). More education, higher income, and being married (Wolfinger and Wolfinger, 2008) also lead to higher participation rates in voting.

This research hypothesizes that early voting has a convenience effect on customarily overperforming groups of voters: those who are white, female, registered party members, wealthier, older, and more educated. Legislative intent for early voting interventions has included making voting easier for the elderly, including automatic mail-out ballots for anyone older than sixty-four in Louisiana, upon a onetime request. Women are registered to vote at higher levels than men, live longer than men do in the United States, and are thus expected to outvote them, especially in older age as a matter of younger male mortality. In Louisiana, women are 54% of the total registered voter population. In the voter population older than seventy-four, women are 59.1% of registered voters and men are 40.9%.

The convenience hypothesis for this research is tested with variables measuring socio-political demographic categories: Gender, age, race, marital status, household income, level of education, political party identification, and political party registration. I test the following specific hypotheses which, if supported, would also support the broader convenience hypothesis.

- 1- Female voters are more likely to early vote than male voters in Louisiana.*
- 2- Older voters are more likely to early vote than younger voters in Louisiana.*
- 3- White voters are more likely to early vote than non-white voters in Louisiana.*
- 4- Married voters are more likely to early vote than non-married voters in Louisiana.*

5- Voters in households with higher than median household incomes are more likely to early vote than voters in lower than median income households in Louisiana.

6- College educated voters are more likely to early vote than non-college educated voters in Louisiana.

7-Registered party voters are more likely to early vote than voters who are not registered party members in Louisiana.

8- Political party identifiers are more likely to early vote than non-major-party identifiers in Louisiana.

The expansions of early voting methods and programs are meant to increase avenues and expand opportunities to participate in elections for voters who find voting on one single election day to be prohibitive. A state senator from Tennessee espoused "...that military personnel, college students, workers with inflexible job situations, the disabled, and persons with transportation difficulties were the most disadvantaged by traditional single-day voting." (Neeley and Richardson, 2001 p.382).

There are costs associated when someone decides to vote. Rational choice literature views early voting as a reduction of the costs associated with participation. Anthony Downs' rational choice model (1957) predicts that as cost of participation decreases, the probability that an individual will cast a vote will increase.

Prior research on this topic produces a mixed bag of conclusions. There are researchers who find that barriers to participation like voter registration keep individuals who would have normally voted, from participating in elections. They posit that early voting policies have changed the process of voting in a way that should theoretically minimize the barriers and decrease the costs of participation, thus producing a mobilization effect among traditionally underrepresented groups. Other studies find that early voting has a convenience effect, meaning that early voting conveniences only benefit those who would have otherwise voted in a single election day paradigm. The question by researchers who find that there is a convenience effect is whether a negligible increase in participation is worth the increased cost to government (Giammo

and Brox, 2010). The cost of additional staff, training, and equipment to accommodate an expansion of voting days are real costs of election administration.

In Louisiana, early voting is divided into categories of: mail-in-absentee and overseas voting, provisional in-person voting (only in federal elections), and in-person early voting. “When there is uncertainty about a voter’s eligibility—the potential voter’s name is not on the voter rolls, a required identification document isn’t available or other issues—the election official is required to offer the voter a provisional ballot instead of a regular ballot” (<https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/provisional-ballots.aspx>). This dissertation focuses on the relationships between individual Louisiana voter characteristics and the stage of election participation: early voting (regardless of type) or election day voting.

Like marriage and education, voting and election policy creation are reserved powers of the U.S. states. Most voting methods, equipment, and policy decisions are made at the state level. Some states delegate that authority to smaller subdivisions (counties or cities) of their respective state. Some states’ election systems are run top-down, under the authority of a state’s chief election officer. Louisiana’s model of election administration is a top-down model where the Louisiana Secretary of State is the state’s top election official and all subdivisions (parishes/counties) and subdivision election officials (clerks of court and registrars of voters) follow directives and policies set forth by the secretary of state for election administration.

"Laboratories of democracy" is a phrase popularized by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis in *New State Ice Co. v. Liebmann* to describe how a "state may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country." Such experiments occur in regular cycles in the U.S. states every two years (congressional elections), four years (most common election cycle for state and local offices), six years (typical judicial district term and U.S. Senate term), and ten years (common appellate court

term), in relation to their powers granted by the U.S. Constitution, for the purpose of conducting elections.

Researchers conclude that election methods, equipment, and policies across the United States affect turnout, are not standardized, and vary in efficiency. However, the fifty policy laboratories model allows for a good opportunity with its experimentations to eventually find a solution (Hale, Montjoy, and Brown, 2015).

Because of the number of elections and voting “laboratories” in the United States, a decision to analyze a top-down model is justifiable, reasonable, and appropriate for this research. Other decentralized models are more susceptible to possible contamination when exposed to particular local policies and customs.

While there are many components to the Louisiana Election Code Title 18 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes, there are relatively few that require interaction with voters. Registration, early-voting, and election day voting are the only stages that require voter participation.

Why Is Early Voting Important?

The importance of early voting is most succinctly expressed by Joseph Giammo and Brian Brox (2010, p. 295) “And for society, early voting presumably advances democratic government, not only by making voting easier and convenient but also by bringing more potential voters to the polls, thus increasing legitimacy.”

While Giammo and Brox state clearly that the ease and convenience to vote is important to have legitimacy in a democratic government, what is not clear is whether or not institutionalized “ease and convenience” are producing the theoretical and intended outcomes in voter turnout rates of all types of voters.

According to Riker (1982), popular participation in civil society through voting is considered important to democratic theory. Keeping with the maxims “everyone counts” and “one man one vote” in democratic theory (Dahl, 1956), voting offers individuals an equal right to make decisions as a whole (Lama-Rewal, 2009; Ahuja and Chibber, 2012; Carswell and De Neve, 2014; Hu and Lee, 2018). Hu and Lee (2018) believe it is possible that voting increases consciousness of equal rights. They find that marginalized groups believe that voting is an important way to claim their rights; these marginalized group members typically have higher voting participation rates than privileged group members (Yadav, 1996; Palshikar and Kumar, 2004). “It is possible that there is a reciprocal relation between voting and consciousness of rights. When individuals have high consciousness of rights, they vote, and through voting, their consciousness of their rights is increased” (Hu and Lee, 2018, p. 3). Thus, if marginalized individuals and groups have a high consciousness of their rights, early voting opportunities will provide additional outlets by which individuals and collective groups express that right by voting. However, should marginalized individuals and groups not have a high consciousness of rights, no mobilization effect should materialize.

Carpenter and Foos (2016) attempt to build on policy-based mobilization theory (Mettler and Soss, 2004; Campbell, 2002) by asking “Can marginalized groups be mobilized by a campaign whose principal policy objective would materially enhance their lives by including them in a major public program?,” (Carpenter and Foos, 2016, p.1) despite confounding results that poor citizens consistently turn out to vote at a lower rate than their peers (Leighley and Nagler, 2014). They test their policy-based mobilization theory by conducting a door-to-door canvassing campaign during the 2014 Alabama gubernatorial election, specifically targeting voters who were identified as being in a health insurance coverage gap, but would benefit if a Medicaid expansion was granted by candidates supporting the measure.

The researchers' mixed method experiment focuses on 11,900 households for a quantitative analysis and twenty-two qualitative in-depth interviews. They find that their experiment yielded no effect on voter turnout among its marginalized subjects.

Hu and Lee's (2018) research comes from an international perspective of Indian election turnout (the world's largest democracy). They build on prior research (Yadav, 1996; Palshikar and Kumar, 2004; Ahuja and Chibber, 2012) of marginalized Indian caste groups and turnout in Indian congressional elections in the 1990s. India's caste system is considered to be its diversity when considering privileged and marginalized groups. Certain caste groups are relegated to certain professions, educational opportunities, and wealth. While caste is not a formal system in the U.S., there have become generations of customarily marginalized groups that resemble some characteristics of a caste system with institutionalized economic and social barriers to housing in certain areas, education, employment, and healthcare opportunities. The consciousness of rights that Hu and Lee (2018) posit should theoretically resonate in the psyche among U.S. marginalized groups who had been denied access to political involvement and voting rights for decades and centuries, thus creating a mobilization effect that is examined in this research.

The study and research of voting is important because it is a link to policies: voters choose elected officials, who then make the policies, which then affect the electoral process, which may affect who votes and who doesn't—it is a cycle.

Louisiana's top down election administration model, headed by the secretary of state, bifurcates early voting and election day voting between each of its parishes' clerk of court and registrar of voters. While there is coordination between agencies, early voting falls under the purview of the registrar of voters while election day responsibilities belong to the clerk of court.

Political campaign professionals desire to know who the voters are and when they are voting. From the smallest political subdivisions to the largest, campaigns want to maximize

efforts in canvassing by touching as many voters as possible, without being redundant. Returning to the homes of voters who have already voted is wasted time. Knowing when specific socio-political and demographic groups are more likely to vote helps with get-out-the-vote (GOTV) strategies.

Campaign strategists focus on different stages of GOTV. It is valuable to know who are more likely to vote early or on election day. Strategists will work with a campaign's public relations agents to time the delivery of propaganda (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). Knowing when voters are most likely to cast their ballots will help campaigns tailor and direct their messages and scarce resources.

Extant literature discusses early voting methods as an evolution by which voters cast their ballots. Research on voter turnout in the United States examines characteristics of an electorate's party apparatus, demographics, electoral administration, voter registration policies, and early voting regulations (Highton and Wolfinger 1998; Stein, 1998; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980).

Like the campaign (candidates, strategists et al), special interest groups and political parties are parts of the GOTV effort (Giammo and Brox, 2010). These actors seek to affect voter mobilization prior to and on election day. Research reveals that political parties and special interest groups employ a myriad of methods to secure an electoral victory (Hogan, 2005). Exploitation of broad and expansive early voting policies leads to greater opportunity for the dissemination of campaign propaganda, including how to vote early (Siira, 2012).

When ideologues, partisans, and ardent supporters are identifiable, a campaign can spend its resources sending messages and information to those constituencies about early voting. Unlike most states, Louisiana's state and local elections are held on Saturdays. Federal elections are held on Tuesdays. Campaign actors believe that diversion and work can be an enemy to voter turnout on election days. Weekday elections can take a backseat to regular work schedules.

Saturday elections can get overshadowed by college football games that draw crowds of 100,000 and more. Weekend vacation homes, recreational sports, and hunting season can all affect turnout on weekend elections. Banking early votes for Louisiana campaigns is critical for success.

Louisiana's early voting window has grown to seven days, including two Saturdays since 1998. Early voting turnout customarily makes up over 20% of all votes in statewide and local elections.

The convenience factor of early voting is a variable that should not be overlooked when rational choice is calculated (Downs, 1957). The broader opportunity and length of time to cast a ballot during the early voting period reduces the cost of voting. However; an additional cost to consider in voting early is that new information about the campaign can arise after the ballot is cast (Thompson, 2004). There are seven states that allow voters to recast their ballots after the early voting period: Connecticut, Hawaii, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. This ballot recasting policy reduces the minimax regret of early voting (Ferejohn & Fiorina, 1974).

Early voting research is important because it can reveal whether or not theoretical expectations are being met by policy interventions. Theoretically, early voting should affect the quality of democracy by expanding opportunities for voters to cast their ballots. Are the costs associated with the interventions worth it (Giammo and Brox, 2010; Montjoy, 2010)? Practical benefits for campaign and election administration actors are that it provides data for decision making in the allocation of scarce public resources as well as direct campaign resources. Election administrators need to know where and when to direct staff and equipment, while campaigns need to know when and where to mobilize voters via marketing and canvassing. Thus, knowing who votes when is critically important.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The literature review for this research includes extant literature on: Who votes, who votes early, who votes on election day, mobilization effects of early voting, and convenience effects of early voting.

There are costs involved in voting. Rational choice literature views early voting as a reduction of the costs associated with participation. Anthony Downs' rational choice model; $V = pB - C$ (1957) where V = the proxy for the probability that the voter will turn out, p = probability of vote "mattering", B = "utility" benefit of voting--differential benefit of one candidate winning over the other, and C = costs of voting (time/effort spent), predicts that as the cost of participation decreases, the probability that an individual will cast a vote increases. Barriers to participation, like work, school, family, and other responsibilities and interests, keep individuals who would have normally voted, from participating in elections (Crutchfield, 1994, Neeley and Richardson, 2001). Early voting policies have changed the process of voting in a way that should minimize the barriers and decrease the costs of participation (Siira, 2012).

In "A Theory of the Calculus of Voting", Riker and Ordeshook (1968) add a "D" variable or *D-term* to Downs' model, ($V = pB - C + D$) where D = citizen duty, goodwill feeling, psychological and civic benefit of voting. These descriptions are esoteric in nature and are in the spirit of Hu and Lee's (2018), "consciousness of rights". If the *D-term* or consciousness of rights are conjurable, a mobilization effect of customarily marginalized individuals and groups will manifest in voter turnout, presumptively in the early voting stage.

V.O. Key (1949) posits that certain groups are ignored by the political system and its outcomes, inasmuch as group rewards, because they do not or cannot participate in politics and/-

or voting. “The blunt truth is that politicians and officials are under no compulsion to pay much heed to classes and groups of citizens that do not vote.” (Key, 1949, p. 527).

While this statement might have been true in 1949, election policies and voting rights have dramatically changed the landscape of who can and who does vote in 2020, particularly in Southern states where black citizens’ voting rights were not significantly expanded until 1965. Some scholars disagree that marginalized groups are ignored because of their non-voting status “...because the policy preferences and attitudes of voters and nonvoters differ only at the margins, nonvoting has no clear consequence” (Martin, 2003, p. 110; Highton and Wolfinger, 2001; Teixeira, 1992; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). If it is true that non-voters’ and voters’ policy preferences are only marginally different, then freeriding by marginalized individuals and groups can be viewed as more of a rational economic decision to not vote rather than it is a consciousness-of-rights or a D-term motivation to vote.

Registration

A prerequisite to casting a valid ballot in Louisiana elections is that a voter must be registered to vote thirty days prior to an election in person or twenty days prior to an election, if the registration is completed on the Secretary of State’s election online electronic application State of (Louisiana Election Code, Title 18). The thirty-day period is set as the maximum number of days for voter registration prior to an election, set forth in the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA), more commonly referred to as “motor voter”. Eleven states have Election Day registration and there is no voter registration required to vote in North Dakota.

Downs’ model of rational choice can be extended to consider the institution of voter registration as a cost of participation. The cost/effort to first register to vote is a more significant barrier to participation for younger, lower income, lower educated, and minority citizens (Pliven and Cloward, 1988). The registration barrier begins to filter those who can participate, thus

influences socio-demographics of who votes. The registration requirement increases the expense of voting by requiring people to be educated on registration deadlines, find registration outlets, and take time from their employment and family obligations (Brians and Grofman 1999; Brown and Wright 1999; Erikson 1981; Kelley, Ayres, and Bowman 1967; Kim, Petrocik, and Enokson 1975; Nagler 1991; Patterson and Caldeira 1983; Pliven and Cloward 1988; Powell 1986; Squire, Wolfinger, and Glass 1987; Teixeira 1992; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Registered voting population socio-demographics differ from overall population socio-demographics of Louisiana. Compared to the overall voting age population, registered voter are older, whiter, with higher income, more educated, and more likely married (Avery and Peffley, 2005).

The result of requiring registration manifests in over representation of older, whiter, higher income, and more educated voters (Avery and Peffley, 2005). Election reform interventions like the Federal Motor Voter initiative, Election Day registration, mail in registration, and online/internet registration are designed to mitigate the impact of participation barriers (Brown and Wedeking, 2006; Fenster, 1994; Fitzgerald, 2005; Franklin and Grier, 1997; Highton, 1997; Highton and Wolfinger, 1998; Hill, 2003; Knack, 1995; Martinez and Hill, 1999; Mitchell and Wlezien, 1995; Rhine, 1995). Some research finds that the previously mentioned interventions have been unsuccessful in creating representativeness in the electorate and conclude that there are motivational factors determining participation in U.S. elections (Brown and Wedeking, 2006; Highton, 1997; Martinez and Hill, 1999; Mitchell and Wlezien, 1995; Timpore, 1998).

Registration impediments are posited to be a significant factor in a transient/mobile society, where the bureaucracy of re-registration and disconnection with a new community have negative impacts on registration and participation (Highton, 2000; Squire, Wolfinger, and Glass, 1987). This phenomenon should have less impact in Louisiana than any other state, when

researching statewide election participation. The 2010 U.S. Decennial Census ranks Louisiana first as the state whose current population was born in the state. Of the 4,544,228 people counted in Louisiana in 2010, 79% were born in Louisiana.

When answering the question “Why do people vote?” Erikson (1981, p. 259) explains it best “Because they are registered.”

Who Votes?

Michael P. McDonald (2010) discusses who turns out to vote in America from a historical perspective. He divides the American voting experience into four eras: The Founding Era 1789-1824, The Party Machine Era 1828-1896, The Segregation Era 1900-1948, and The Nationalization Era 1952-present. McDonald puts the notion of what turnout means into a logical historical perspective by not describing turnout as sheer numbers, but defining turnout in a logical context as a percentage of the pool of eligible voters.

McDonald (2010) explains that there were two mindsets among the Founding Fathers of who could vote. Those who wanted to expand the franchise argued that voting was a right while those who desired to restrict it contended that it was a privilege. Ultimately, the matter was resolved in the Constitution that the individual state legislatures should decide on suffrage qualifications.

The pool of those who can vote has expanded and contracted over time. Initially, only white men and free men of color, who owned property, could vote. Over the course of time, federal initiatives in the form of Constitutional amendments expanded suffrage regardless of property ownership, race, and gender, and lowered the voting age to eighteen. These expansions of the franchise generally followed times of war when contributions by the affected groups were recognized (Keyssar, 2001; McDonald, 2010). During periods of anti-immigrant sentiment and the Jim Crow era, barriers to participation were raised in the form of intimidation and violence,

voter roll purges, literacy tests and other strict voter registration requirements. Most barriers remained until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA).

Today, all American citizens who are eighteen, with the exception of felony convictions in some states (McDonald, 2010; Uggen, and Manza, 2002), are eligible to register to vote and participate.

McDonald (2010) posits that in the current Nationalization Era, barriers to participation have been removed rather than placed.

With the theoretical reduction in the cost of voting, shouldn't voter turnout have increased? Education level has increased, which is a positive indicator with voting. However, turnout, with the exception of the South, has not risen, and has been in a long-term decline since 1968 (McDonald 2010; Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980).

Brody (1978) asks why turnout has not increased when positively correlated variables like higher education levels, reduction of participation barriers, and a wider age range of voter eligibility. We are left with the question "Have the discussed positive expansions in the franchise helped, hurt, or had no effect on voting participation?" One theory is that the American National Election Study (ANES), and some scholars began calculating voter turnout according to the voting age population (VAP), instead of eligible registered voters, which McDonald describes as "curious."

McDonald and Popkin (2001) believe that the VAP calculation of turnout is a measurement error. The authors cite that beginning in 1972, there began a significant influx of legal and illegal immigration into the US, and when voter turnout is properly calculated, it does not reveal a decline in voter turnout rates. Walter Burnham is recognized as the researcher who first noticed the trend and adjusted historical turnout rates to reflect ineligible populations (McDonald, 2010).

Brody's research reveals that while there have been fluctuations of ten percent in national turnout since 1968, there is not a decline in participation among eligible voters. Based on Brody's method of turnout calculation of registered voters versus VAP, the 2004 US Presidential election saw sixty percent turnout, which had not happened since 1968.

Besides the ineligible-to-vote immigrant population, who are included in the VAP turnout calculation but not in Brody's turnout calculation, are the eighteen to twenty-one-year-old group. This age cohort consistently results in a very low percentage turnout category and affects overall eligible voter turnout by one to two percentage points (McDonald and Popkin, 2001). This could be an unintended consequence of the NVRA. A sixteen-year-old who procures a four to six-year valid driver's license will not have the opportunity to take advantage of the NVRA intervention until they are twenty to twenty-two years old. Even if an eighteen-year-old does register to vote, the eighteen to twenty-one-year-old age cohort is vulnerable to a change in residency, thus increasing the cost to participate by re-registering in a new community or to incur the transportation and time cost to return to the polling place where they are registered (Highton, 2000; Squire, Peverill, Wolfinger, and Glass, 1987).

Bhatti and Hansen (2012) focus on election turnout among first-time younger voters in a statistical analysis of 145,000 young adults. The authors hypothesize that parental voting behavior socializes the youth's voting habits. The authors find correlations with age and turnout, finding that higher participation rates of eighteen to nineteen-year-old voters, do not return to that rate until they are thirty-five years old. From age nineteen, they find a one percent point turnout drop per month in age until the voters are thirty-five years old.

In another 2012 article, Bhatti and Hansen hypothesize that being married positively correlates with voting participation as does gender. Their research finds that being married, versus being divorced or never married, results in a seven to eight percent increase in turnout.

They include widowed status in their analysis and determine that because of significantly older age in this category, widowed people are less likely to vote than are married people. They find age curvilinear at both ends of the age spectrum while concluding that voting is a social behavior and is related also to cohabitation.

Wolfinger and Wolfinger (2008) explore the effects on family structure and participation in the 2000 presidential election. They use data from the 2000 Voting and Registration Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) (2000 decennial US Census). The researchers cross examine demographics of the questionnaire against the National Elections Survey of 1,555 respondents in 2000. Their findings are that married individuals are significantly more likely to vote than those never married. Interestingly, married people who are childless are more likely to vote than married with children. The least likely voters in their study were never-married people with children. The authors conclude, “In many respects this is predictable. Married people enjoy greater physical and emotional health (Waite and Gallagher, 2000). They have partners to help with household tasks and also most of the chores associated with voting: not only registration, but also locating polling places or obtaining absentee ballots (p. 1481).”

Republicans and Democrats are divided on enfranchisement, as were the Founding Fathers. The debate is similar. Democrats view voting as a right and prefer to increase the franchise by reducing institutional barriers to participation including removing registration requirements such as voter registration and pictured identification. They believe these barriers negatively affect their constituency of disadvantaged, minority, less educated, and younger voters. Republicans see voting as a right and privilege, maintaining that voter registration purges and voter identification requirements are minimal costs and are helpful in reducing voter fraud (Keyssar, 2001).

Party identification can be an indicator of one's predisposition to vote in an election according to G.B. Powell (1986). Powell's research finds positive relationships with the strength of party identification, level of education, and age with voting participation. As the level of these variables rise, so does their likeliness to vote.

In *The decline of American political parties: 1952 -1996* (2009), Wattenberg charts the decline of partisan identification and strong partisan identity between 1952 to 1980 using survey data where split-ticket voting is the dependent variable. This line of research is important and interesting "Because citizens who do not identify with a political party are generally seen as holding the power, such an increase is both strategically significant for those concerned with winning elections and theoretically significant for scholars concerned with the stability of the American party system (p. 106)." With such practical and theoretical importance placed on these types of voters, it will surely be important to know if, why, and when they vote.

Keith et al (1986) examine self-identified independent voters to discover that can be just as partisan party identifiers. They find that there are two types of self-identified independents, ones who are leaners and the others who are "Pure Independents". Leaners are just as likely to vote with the major party that they lean toward as those who self-identify as partisans. The authors test who is likely to turn out to vote between strong identifiers, weak identifiers, independent leaners, and Pure Independents. They found that leaners were as likely to vote as strong partisan identifiers, however, Pure Independents were less likely to vote than partisans or leaners.

Magleby, Keith, and Nelson, who were among the authors of the 1986 study, follow up on their research (Magleby et al, 2011) to discover that even more Americans are identifying as Independents than did they in the 1986 research. A change that they uncovered was that leaners

became slightly more likely to vote than did party identifiers and that Pure Independents were even less likely to vote than they were in the 1986 research.

Dennis (1988) identifies four types of independent voters in *Political Independence in America, Part II: Towards a Theory*. Those types are those who have 1) negative feelings about the major parties, 2) a positive identification with ideals of independence, 3) a neutrality or indifference toward the major parties, and 4) a self-perceived variability in their own partisanship.

Registered partisanship, or nonpartisanship, is different than party identity. Voters registered with major parties may identify as an Independents, and conversely, someone who is not registered with a major party may identify as a partisan or leaner. This is important to understand when we begin our analyses of the variables party registration and party identification.

Coffe and Bolzendahl (2010) investigate gender gaps in the political participation categories: voting, private activism (signing petitions, boycotting), and direct activism (contacting elected officials, collective action, active in political parties) using linear and logistic regression models and a random sample of 16,564 cases found in the 2004 International Social Survey Program (ISSP) of eighteen Western industrialized countries, including the USA. Dependent variables in the research include: voting, political party membership, private activism, collective activism, and political direct contact (contacting politicians and media directly). Individual characteristic variables include: gender, age, employment status, occupation, marital status, home value, and religiosity. The researchers control for socioeconomic characteristics and find that females are more likely than males to vote. Men are more likely to be involved in direct activism and women are more likely to be involved in private activism. The research shows that men and women have different inclinations when it comes to political participation

behavior. This study finds that socio-economics are also factors in participation when considering employment, marital status, education, age, and religiosity. For men, any level of employment has a positive relationship to voting, while only being employed full time positively affects women. Educational attainment has a positive effect on women voting but not on men. Regular attendance at churches, synagogues, and mosques positively affects voting for men but not women. Age has a positive effect on both men and women, but above age fifty, women are more likely to vote than are men. When considering marital status, being single positively affects women's political participation but being divorced has a negative relationship with voting. Being divorced does not significantly affect men's voting behavior.

Employment overall provides advantages for men (Schlozman et al, 1999) and because women in first-world Western democracies generally spend more of their time on household chores than their male partners, women have less time for political participation (Batalova and Cohen, 2002). Coffe and Bolzendal surmise that being employed has a direct effect on women's leisure time and that it does not have on men. Thus, women will participate electorally and privately but do not have time for direct activism

Religiosity has positive affect on participation for men in teaching civic skills (Putnam, 2000). Regular faith adherence and congregational participation are shown to have a stronger positive political participation effect on males (Read 2007; Robnett and Bany, 2011).

Marital status and having children are also found to have effects on political participation. Coffe and Bolzendal (2010) find that being married and having children produces a negative effect on women's participation. "Once married, women's leisure time declines to a greater extent than men" (Gupta, 1999 p. 710; Sayer, 2009). More of women's time becomes occupied with house work and men's time on housework decreases.

The level of formal education on an individual level is a key predictor for voting in the U.S. “People with more education have a higher sense of civic duty, and a stronger allegiance to the political system. Voting is a crucial means to fulfilling this duty and affirming their allegiance” (Warren, 2008, p.p. 196-97).

Education and political participation intersect. Nie et al (1996 p. 268) examine the role of increasing levels of formal educational attainment and its relationship to voting and democratic engagement. The researchers surmise that education attainment leads to recognizing one’s own interests and the avenues one must take to affect them. Education maximizes social positing and access to political system decision makers. Their research employs the 1990 Citizen Participation Study’s data. Voting is analyzed as a dependent variable and is described as “civic engagement” in the study i.e. civic engagement is operationalized as voting. They find the likelihood of voting is correlated with formal educational attainment and that the level of education supersedes any other demographic indicator when predicting the likelihood of voting.

So, who votes? Those who can afford the costs associated with the registration process and have the slack resource of time: People who have the time it takes to figure out where to vote, those who have government issued identification, those who are more educated, higher income, and older.

Who Votes Early?

In “Election Laws, Mobilization, and Turnout: The Unanticipated Consequences of Election Reform,” (2014) Burden et. al. conduct both aggregate and individual level analyses of voter turnout in the 2004 and 2008 U.S. Presidential elections. The authors desire to find relationships between voter demographic participation with same-day registration (SDR) and election-day registration (EDR) policies. SDR policies, as described by the authors, allow a voter

to participate in an election during the in-person early voting stage of an election, prior to election day. EDR policies allow unregistered voters to register to vote on an election day. The research finds that EDR has a positive effect on turnout while SDR has a negative effect and diminishes turnout.

Burden et. al. (2014) include the variables: length of residency, gender, marital status, race, education, and citizenship type (e.g. natural born or not) in their individual-level regression analysis of 2004 and 2008 election turnout. They find that marriage, higher income, higher education, and long-term residency have positive effects on overall turnout. Age also correlates positively, though it is curvilinear for the youngest and oldest age cohorts. Eighteen and nineteen-year-olds who live at home are more likely to participate than twenty somethings who do not live with parents (Bhatti and Hansen, 2012).

To test their hypothesis that SDR and EDR will have a convenience effect for those voters who are already predisposed to vote on election day, Burden et.al. conduct county-level regression analysis which offers evidence that early voting election reforms may result in fewer voters and an over-representation of voters who will ordinarily vote in single-day elections

Gronke et.al. (2008) review the extant early voting literature in “Convenience Voting.” Among early voting policy and election administration alternatives, the researchers include a partisan impact variable for consideration. Results found in the research conclude that while some Republican advantage is found in early voting, it is a function of party mobilization and not in voter self-selection (Gronke et. al. 2008; Karp and Banducci, 2000). Stein et al (2005) posit that the party and campaign that are better organized and better funded will have the advantage in early voting.

Gronke et. al. conclude “...convenience voting appears to exacerbate existing inequalities in the American political system, encouraging participation among those segments of the population who are already most likely to vote.”

Berinsky (2005) says that while tangible institutional election and voting barriers are removed, cognitive barriers remain. He continues that there remains a cognitive advantage for those predisposed to voting in the first place, thus magnifying socioeconomic biases in the electorate. Responding to Berinsky’s conclusion, Giammo and Brox (2010, p. 298) write, “If Berinsky is correct, then convenience voting is more of a handout to the resource-rich members of society rather than a worthy effort to improve democracy through expanding the electorate.”

Kropf (2012) advances Berinsky’s (2005) hypothesis that early voting innovations have led to a magnification of the existing bias of higher socio-economic status (SES) in electoral participation, in her analysis of secondary source data of North Carolina’s 2008 voter database. The analysis reveals that those who voted early were higher income, more educated, and older voters. The methodology of the research utilizes historical voter data in eight counties. The dependent variable of the research is early-voted or election-day voted, with independent variables found in the database: race, age, gender, party registration, political subdivisions, and voting history (just like the Louisiana voter file). The researcher states that these data are objective and not self-reported in a survey. The researcher estimates SES of voters based upon the geographic information of the voters’ political subdivisions.

Kropf’s (2012) analysis of the 2008 US Presidential election turnout produces a mixed bag of results regarding socio-demographic participation. She finds that 1) living in a high-income zip code is significantly related to early voting in 2008, 2) those who had never voted before were more likely to vote early, which is attributed to North Carolina’s SDR policy, 3)

blacks were more likely to vote early, 4) females were more likely to vote early, 5) Democrats were more likely to vote early, and 6) older individuals were more likely to vote early. Kropf finds that the 2008 participation and stage of voter turnout, compared to previous presidential and U.S. Senate elections, was highly influenced by the mobilization of the Obama campaign and other mobilizing facilitators like moveon.org; having a positive effect on black and first-time voter participation.

Kropf finds that the long-term effect of early voting in North Carolina has magnified the advantage of higher socio-economic-status (SES) voters, a finding similar to Berinsky's (2005).

Giammo and Brox (2010) finds that convenience voting in the form of early voting, absentee voting, and mail-in ballots, does not increase turnout, without party mobilization interventions. They find that even when mail-in balloting is an automated option selected at the point of registration (where available), voters who miss an election cycle are removed from the mail-in rolls (but remain on the voter roll) leaving those most engaged as the winners of convenience voting policies.

Neeley and Richardson (2001) analyze the socio-demographics of early voters and traditional voters (election-day voters). They hypothesize that age, income, race, and partisanship have relationships with early voting and traditional voting. This individual-level examination sets a precedent for the research design employed in this dissertation. The authors conducted surveys of a subset of the voting population of registered voters in one Tennessee county during the last week of early voting leading up to the 1996 presidential election. The researchers feel strongly that this one county provides a good test of their mobilization thesis because the county was a pioneer in the full implementation of early voting methods and

practices, including the location of early voting polling places in non-traditional venues like shopping malls.

Neeley and Richardson conducted a survey of 358 individual cases. There are 118 early voters, forty non-voting registrants, and 200 election day voters. Furthermore, the authors post-weight the cases in their logistic analysis to correct for sample deviations from the population's parameters. In their conclusion, the authors find that there is not a mobilization effect, only that the early voting provides a convenience for those who otherwise would have voted; older, white, more affluent, and registered Republican Party voters.

Alvarez et. al. (2012) conduct a multivariate analysis of the 2008 U.S. Presidential election using a large national sample survey. Their data collection survey methods were by phone and web. Variables in their survey included: Race, gender, age group, education level, party ID, ideology, home ownership, and disability. The goals of the multivariate analysis were to identify relationships with voter socio-demographics and the choice of which stage of the election process the respondent chose to participate- early voting or election day. The researchers find that Democrats, men, the elderly, disabled, well educated (post grad), and strong partisans are more likely to choose early voting than are Republicans, women, younger, less educated, and weak partisans who are more likely to vote on Election Day. Their findings are congruent with extant convenience voting literature and research on "likely voters", with the exception that men were more likely to early vote.

Louisiana Legislative Intent of Early Voting

On May 24, 2005, Louisiana State Representative Wayne Waddell introduced House Bill 336, which would become Act 220 of the 2005 Regular Session, to the House Governmental

Affairs Committee. The video archive can be found in the Louisiana House of Representatives website: http://house.louisiana.gov/H_Video/VideoArchivePlayer.aspx?v=house/2005/may/0524_05_HG

The testimony begins at the 3-hour and 34-minute mark.

Prior to the enactment of Act 220, registered voters in Louisiana could only procure an absentee ballot to early vote from their registrar of voters by signing an affidavit proclaiming that the voter would be out of town on election day. Waddell's testimony describes his bill as only changing the language that would allow voters to cast an absentee ballot without having to sign the affidavit, thus, not having to have an excuse to vote early. Questions from the committee's chairman, Charles Lancaster, regarding a potential increase of election administration expense as a result of the proposal and would require a fiscal note was rebutted by Waddell. Waddell asserted that the intervention would not increase hours of operation or require additional personnel at registrar offices, as was reported to him by his own registrar of voters in Caddo Parish.

Waddell went on to report that he did not expect an increase in voter turnout as a result of this method, but that it would result in people not having to lie about being out of town for the election. He cited that twenty-three other states had introduced early voting and that the results of it did not increase turnout, only that the addition of satellite voting sites proved to increase turnout rates. While the description of how early voting began in Louisiana may sound pedestrian and lack luster, it is worth noting that no election experts, political scientists, or any other witnesses were called to testify in the committee on the matter.

Lancaster made a motion to refer the bill for fiscal noting, the committee declined Lancaster's motion and passed the bill as introduced by Waddell and became law in the 2005 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature as Act 220.

While there was no assertion in Louisiana's legislative debate that allowing no-excuse early voting would increase the opportunity for underrepresented voters to vote, the rationale was that twenty-three other states had enacted such policies, whose legislative intent and theoretical assumptions were just that. Therefore, the hypothesis that early voting interventions and expansions in Louisiana elections will increase turnout among socio-demographically underrepresented voters is theoretically sound.

Conclusion

The literature on voting behavior and early voting choice offers scarce evidence that early voting interventions and policies lead to long term mobilization of historically underrepresented demographic groups. However, a preponderance of research reveals that early voting opportunities lead to a convenience effect, thus doing nothing to increase diversity in voting participation.

The most significant evidence of a mobilization effect (Kropf, 2012) would be the 2008 presidential election and Barack Obama's candidacy. Minority communities were energized in both early voting and election day voting in that cycle. Perhaps in areas where Sundays were once part of early voting calendars, but were subsequently taken back from early voting, returning to Sunday voting might have produced higher rates of traditionally underrepresented groups.

It is logical that creating more opportunities to vote, and reducing individuals' cost to vote, will lead to higher participation levels of those who do not traditionally vote in single day elections. This is the basis of mobilization theory. However, more studies find that the reductions of cost to an individual of voting and the increases of opportunities to vote are actually a benefit to those individuals and groups who are the most likely to vote, thus, exacerbating the

disparity in representativeness between competing groups. Voting as a habit or tradition has been found to be a predictable indicator of whether someone will vote early, given the opportunity.

Based upon extant research, voters with higher income, more education, are married, are partisans, are white, and are older, are most likely to vote. My research is the first to examine statewide population datasets by analyzing more than five million voters at the individual level and their choice of early voting or election day voting over four consecutive statewide elections. We are able to see empirically how sex, race, age, and party registration intersect with the choice to early vote or to vote on election day.

Partisanship, be it by virtue of registration or self-identification, is suspected to be an indicator of early voting. Party loyalists are expected to have more “skin in the game” in an election. Independents, Pure Independents, nonpartisans, and no party voters do not usually identify with the candidates of either major party and can be disinterested and have abysmal turnout records, compared to partisans. We expect that early voting opportunities will be more likely be used by registered partisans and partisan identifiers.

We expect that older voters will be more likely to early vote than will younger voters. Younger voters have a history of lower election turnout rates than older voters in U.S. elections. Expectations that older voters will participate in early voting is congruent with a convenience effect and will be tested as such in this dissertation.

Theoretical expectations among proponents of early-voting laws are that early voting opportunities reduce the cost of voting to individuals, thus, should result in a mobilization of customarily underrepresented populations. We do not expect to find a mobilization effect in this research, however. Most research to date indicates that early voting laws make it easier to vote for those already in the habit of voting, rather than expanding the universe of groups likely to vote. Thus, we hypothesize that early voting in Louisiana results in a convenience effect, where

underrepresented populations will continue to be underrepresented in turnout rates, even among early voters.

Chapter 3

Hypotheses and Data Collection

The hypothesis for a convenience effect in this dissertation is arrived at after thorough examination of prior research and extant literature on voting and early voting participation. Additionally, an examination of frequencies in the datasets of interest suggests that traditionally underrepresented groups are not taking advantage of early voting opportunities compared to their counterparts. While the raw data show a numerical difference, a statistical significance is sought in this research, thus we create our hypothesis to create the scientific framework for testing.

Hypothesis – The expansion of early voting in Louisiana results in a convenience effect, where voters who would regularly vote on election day are taking the most advantage of early voting opportunities.

This hypothesis is tested using multivariate analysis, with the expectation that groups of voters who tend to turn out at higher rates on election day are expected to turn out at higher rates during early voting periods as well.

Variable 1: Gender - Female voters are more likely to early vote than male voters in Louisiana.

Coffe and Bolzedahl (2010) find that men are more likely to vote at younger ages; in early middle-age the gap vanishes, but above age fifty, women are more likely to vote than men. The average age of registered voters in Louisiana is fifty years old and the average age of those who actually vote is slightly higher. Women are registered at higher rates than are men in Louisiana and turn out to vote at higher rates than do men.

“In the case of voter turnout, researchers have found that men were significantly more likely to vote than women for decades after enfranchisement, although this gap had become reversed in the 1980s” (Manza and Brooks, 1998 p.1236; see also Merriam and Gosnell, 1924; Welch, 1977; Baxter and Lansing, 1983; Beckwith, 1986; Firebaugh and Chen, 1995). We test this hypothesis in favor of a convenience effect, where we believe women are more likely to early

vote than are men. The four population datasets of the elections of interest are used to test the hypothesis.

Variable 2: Age - Older voters are more likely to early vote than younger voters in Louisiana.

Theoretically, the convenience of early voting should allow the time and reduction of costs associated with participating in an election, thus, producing a more representative overall turnout, including age. Early voting has not leveled the playing field when it comes to participation by younger voters. Voter turnout tends to rise with age (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980), and if the convenience hypothesis holds, then older people should be more likely to vote early, as they do on election day. The literature and previous research find that older voters are participating through early voting conveniences significantly more than are younger voters (Bhatti and Hansen, 2012, LA Secretary of State Statistics on election demographic group turnout 2015-2016). We test this hypothesis in favor of a convenience effect, where we believe there is a positive relationship with age and early voting. I hypothesize that older voters are more likely to early vote than are younger voters. The population datasets of the four elections of interest are used to test the hypothesis. We use the median age of the electorate as the division point to operationalize “older” and “younger” voters.

Variable 3: Race - White voters are more likely to early vote than non-white voters in Louisiana.

Extant literature and empirical Louisiana secretary of state data (LA Secretary of State Statistics on election demographic group turnout 2015-2016) and research on race and early voting participation produces mixed results, specifically considering the 2008 election cycle when Barack Obama was elected. Preceding that election, early voting innovations and interventions had been shown to exacerbate disparity in racial representation in voter turnout. I hypothesize that white voters will be more likely to have early voted in Louisiana in 2016 which

follows research trends prior to and after the 2008 US presidential election. I hypothesize that white voters are more likely to early vote than are non-white voters. The population datasets of the four elections of interest are used to test the hypothesis. We code white voters as “1” and all other voters as “0” in a binary logistic regression to test the hypothesis, using the population datasets of the four elections of interest.

Variable 4: Marital Status -Married voters are more likely to early vote than non-married voters in Louisiana.

How marital status relates to voting participation in early voting or Election Day voting is not found in current or historical US databases like the categories: race, age, gender, political affiliation, and geographical location. Bhatti and Hansen (2012) find in their analysis of Danish voter files, that do include marital status, that being married and cohabitating positively correlates with voting participation, and that people who are actually married have the highest turnout rate of all. Wolfinger and Wolfinger (2008) also find that marital status correlates with voting participation. They find married individuals are more likely to vote than never married individuals. This hypothesis is tested in the survey of 1,902 Louisiana voters in the November 8, 2016 U.S. presidential election

Variable 5: Income - Voters in households with higher than median household incomes are more likely to early vote than voters in lower than median income households in Louisiana.

A preponderance of the literature on voting behavior supports that higher-income individuals are more likely to be registered to vote and do vote (Leighly and Nagler, 2013, Henry 2004, Blakely, Kennedy, and Kawachi, 2001, Brooks, Clem, And Brady, 1999, Filer, Kenny, and Morton, 1993, Chapman and Palda, 1983). Even though early voting innovations are thought to help reduce the individual’s cost of voting and help lower-income voters ability to participate, studies have shown that early voting magnifies over-representation of higher-income voters. This

hypothesis is tested in the survey of 1,902 Louisiana voters in the November 8, 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Variable 6: Education - College educated voters are more likely to early vote than non-college educated voters in Louisiana.

Just as higher income has a positive effect on voting participation, so does higher educational attainment. The more education that an individual attains, the more likely it is that the individual will vote (Warren 2008; Nie et al, 1996). This assertion is well documented in extant literature as is the likelihood that more educated individuals will participate in early voting, contrary to the theoretical assumption that early voting allows lower costs of participation for disadvantaged individuals. This hypothesis is tested in the survey of 1,902 Louisiana voters in the November 8, 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Variable 7: Political Party Registration - Registered major party voters are more likely to vote early than voters who are not registered partisans in Louisiana.

Partisan registration should have an effect on early voting participation. Partisans are more likely to vote than nonpartisans (Bartels, 2000). In contests between two partisan candidates e.g. Democrat versus Republican U.S. presidential elections, registered partisans will likely have their minds made up on who they will vote for, thus, they can take advantage of early voting opportunities. Nonpartisans on the other hand may not decide on a candidate until much closer to election day.

The raw population data revealed in appendix tables B, C, D, and E, we see that “other party” (nonpartisans) registrants are underrepresented in turnout rates in the four elections of interest in Louisiana in 2015 and 2016. The population datasets of the four elections of interest are used to test the hypothesis. I hypothesize that voters who are registered as partisans (Democrats and Republicans) are more likely to early vote than are nonpartisans, those registered

as something other than Democrat or Republican. Partisans are coded as “1” and nonpartisans are coded as “0” for a multivariate binary logistic regression analysis.

Variable 8: Political Party Identity – Major party identifiers are more likely to early vote than non-major party identifiers in Louisiana.

In Bartels, 2000’ “Partisanship and voting behavior, 1952-1996, he finds that strong identifiers are more likely to vote in U.S. presidential elections than are weak identifiers or nonpartisans. Weinschenk (2013) builds on Bartels’ research where he uncovers an increasing disparity between strong party identification voting participation and nonpartisan participation.

While party registration and party identification aren’t identical, they are not incongruent. A partisan identity is expected to have a positive relationship with early voting. Those who identify as partisans (Democrats and Republicans) are expected to also be more likely to early vote than are nonpartisans. This hypothesis will be tested in the survey of 1,902 Louisiana voters in the November 8, 2016 U.S. presidential election. I hypothesize that voters who identify as partisans (Democrats and Republicans) are more likely to early vote than are nonpartisans, those identify themselves as something other than Democrat or Republican. Partisans are coded as “1” and nonpartisans are coded as “0” for a multivariate binary logistic regression analysis.

Data Collection

Historical Louisiana election data sets of more than five million individual level cases of four statewide elections between 2015 and 2016 are employed to conduct an individual-level analysis of voter demographics: race, gender, age, and party registration (independent variables) against the action of early voting (dependent variable). All registered voters in Louisiana have public voter profiles with the Louisiana Secretary of State’s office. This profile contains an individual's: name, residential address, mailing address, all of the political subdivisions they are qualified to vote in, telephone number, gender, age, race, and voting participation history for

twenty past elections. This information is available to the public and is regularly purchased by campaign candidates, pollsters, and researchers. We collected two voter files from the LA Secretary of State's office in compiling a census dataset of all those who voted in Louisiana in the 2016 election of presidential electors. The first dataset is of all voters who voted early in the 2016 election for presidential electors. All cases in this dataset were coded with a variable "1" to identify the cases as "early voted". The next data provided by the LA Secretary of State's office is of all voters who voted on election day in the 2016 election for Presidential Electors. All cases in this dataset are coded with a variable "0" to identify these cases as "election day voted". The two datasets are combined as a census dataset of 2,049,570 cases of all those who voted in Louisiana in the 2016 election of Presidential Electors.

We conducted a separate survey of early voters in Louisiana on November 3, 2016 (early voting in Louisiana had concluded by Tuesday November 1, 2016 in Louisiana) to collect data for the demographic variables: Marital status, household income, political party identification, educational attainment, gender, age, and race. On March 21, 2017 this researcher conducted a poll of Louisiana registered voters who voted on election day November 8, 2016 to collect data for the same demographic variables: marital status, household income, political party identification, educational attainment, gender, age, and race. There are 1,902 observed cases that make up this survey dataset. The surveys are confidential and in accordance with the University of New Orleans Institutional Review Board approval. The statewide surveys for this research remove the voters' names and addresses from the case file while retaining their phone numbers and congressional districts. The survey must ask the respondent their gender, age, race, and party ID. To assume that the demographic information from the voter file will match the person who answers the phone would be a serious error. This is why I ask in my dissertation survey of early voters their demographic information/categories plus the filter question "did you vote early?"

Imagine that a phone number might be associated with a family of three to four people; one voted early, two voted on election day, and one did not vote. We do not know who will answer the phone. That is why these types of filter questions must be put into an automated survey like this one. When I wanted only early voter responses, I ended the survey if someone said they voted on election day or did not vote. The same filter applied for surveying election day voters. If someone responded that they voted early or did not vote, the survey ended.

The value of employing an early voter file for random sampling of early voters is that it provided a more confident method of reaching early voters. The same strategy applied for election day voter files and surveying.

The variables in this research design that are not included in the Louisiana Secretary of State's voter file are: marital status, education attainment, household income, and political party identification (not registration). These data are captured utilizing the 2016 US Presidential election survey of Louisiana voters.

Conclusion

The convenience effect hypothesis is that early voting opportunities are a benefit to those who are predisposed to voting and create deeper cleavages between voter types, thus diluting representativeness in the electorate. The socio-demographic characteristics chosen to measure the effects are customary variables used in social science disciplines. The variables for sex, race, age, political party registration, and voting history are all objective secondary data found in the public record.

There is no public record of individual voters' marital status, household income, level of education, or political party identification (how they think of their political affiliation). These are customary variables in social science research that are important to this dissertation, thus a survey

of voters had to be conducted to measure relationships between these variables and voting stage participation.

We lay out an analytical design and methodology in the next chapter describing the collection of data and the instruments used to collect it.

Chapter 4

Analytical Design for Assessing Relationships

Research Design Methodology

The data analyzed here are population datasets from four consecutive statewide Louisiana elections between 2015 and 2016. The unit of analysis is on an individual level of 5,242,997 cases. The analysis includes only people who voted in each election, not all eligible registered voters. The dependent variable is whether the person early voted or not. This research seeks to find significant individual characteristics that distinguish early voters from election-day voters.

There are two theoretical camps of how early voting affects demographic turnout in elections, the mobilization camp and the convenience camp. Mobilization theory posits that early voting provides an extended period of voting, thus creating more opportunities to vote and a reduced cost of voting to the individual voter. Mobilization theory expects to see more demographically diverse and representative turnouts, where early voting interventions are implemented. Mobilization is a justification for early voting expansions.

Convenience theory posits that early voting leads to “more of the same” in demographic turnout in elections. If older, white, college educated, female, and major-party members are more likely to vote to begin with, convenience theory suggests that these demographic groups will also be more likely to take advantage of early voting opportunities.

If the convenience theory is upheld by empirical data, we must consider whether or not early voting interventions are advancing or stymieing the desired representative outcomes that early voting and mobilization policies seek to affect.

Giammo and Brox (2010) subscribe to the convenience effect of early voting. Their research finds that early voting produces only a short-lived mobilization effect that vanishes by the second presidential election in which early voting is available. After a period of two

presidential election cycles, the increased participation rates of mobilized groups decrease to the previous historical (pre-early voting) rates of participation. The elections examined in this dissertation occurred several election cycles after early voting was introduced in Louisiana. Therefore, I expect the results of my individual-level analyses of Louisiana voters to support the convenience hypothesis.

Statewide elections in Louisiana 2015-2016

Population datasets sets are compiled of individual cases for all who voted in each respective election. Every case for each election is coded as either “Voted Early” or “Voted Election Day.” The datasets represent entire populations of interest. Logistic regression analyses, of relationships between the dependent variable, early voting, and the independent variables: gender, age, race, party registration, are performed and reported in the research findings.

A separate survey dataset of the 2016 presidential election includes the independent socio-demographic variables: marital status, household income, educational attainment, and party identification. All of the variable data for the analysis of the 2016 U.S. presidential election surveys are self-reported by survey respondents, except the congressional district variable that is correlated with each case in the official voter file.

Each Louisiana registered voter has a unique voter registration number, when combined with their parish’s numerical value e.g. Tangipahoa Parish is #53 in numerical order 1-64, thus a voter registration number “123456789” for John Doe is expressed uniquely as: “53-123456789”.

This research employs: 1) an individual level analysis employing historical voting population data for variables: gender, age category, race, and political party registration, and 2) an individual level analysis of the 2016 U.S. Presidential election in Louisiana employing a

random sample data set of respondents self-reporting their socio-demographic variables: marital status, household income category, party identification, and education category.

Binary logistic regression analyses are conducted at the individual level on the population of all registered voters who voted in each of four consecutive Louisiana statewide elections from 2015 through 2016. These regression tests will reveal if specific socio-political demographic indicators are significant predictors of early voting. Gender, age, race, and party registration demographic are included in the four statewide election datasets. Each election has a different population size. In the October 24, 2015 Louisiana gubernatorial primary, 1,134,612 people voted. November 21, 2015 was a gubernatorial runoff election where 1,165,686 people voted. On November 8, 2016, the US presidential election topped the Louisiana ballot and 2,049,570 people voted. There was a runoff election on December 10, 2016 for US Senate with 893,129 voters.

In total, this research analyzes 5,242,997 individual cases of voter behavior in the choice of voting stage preference over four statewide elections.

Table 1. Description of the dates, types, turnout frequencies, and the percentage of early voters in the elections of interest.

Date	Top Ballot Statewide Races	Stage	Number of Voters	Number of Early Voters	Percentage Early Voters
12/10/2016	US Senate	Runoff	893,129	182,993	21%
11/8/2016	US President/US Senate	General/Primary	2,049,570	531,390	26%
11/21/2015	Gubernatorial	Runoff	1,165,686	270,179	23%
10/24/2015	Gubernatorial	Primary	1,134,612	234,704	21%

A binary logistic regression analysis is also conducted at the individual level on a sample of 1,902 voters who voted in the November 8, 2016 Presidential Election in Louisiana. This regression reveals if specific socio-political demographic indicators are significant predictors of early voting. The socio-political demographic categories tested in this analysis include:

household income, level of educational attainment, marital status, and political party

identification.

Hypothesis – Early voting expansions in Louisiana are leading to a convenience effect for voters who are most likely to vote

To test the hypothesis, we must test the following socio-political demographics while employing “early voted” or not as the dependent variable:

- 1- Female voters are more likely to early vote than male voters in Louisiana.
- 2- Older voters are more likely to early vote than younger voters in Louisiana.
- 3- White voters are more likely to early vote than non-white voters in Louisiana.
- 4- Married voters are more likely to early vote than non-married voters in Louisiana.
- 5- Voters in households with higher than median household incomes are more likely to early vote than voters in lower than median income households in Louisiana.
- 6- College educated voters are more likely to early vote than non-college educated voters in Louisiana.
- 7-Registered partisan (Democrats and Republicans) voters are more likely to vote early than nonpartisan or other-party registered voters in Louisiana.
- 8- Political party (Democrat and Republican) identifiers are more likely to early vote than nonpartisan or other-party identifiers in Louisiana.

The Survey Instrument

A survey of 1,902 Louisiana voters was conducted on November 3rd, 2016 (early voters) and March 21, 2017 (election-day voters) on the topic of presidential candidate preference/job performance and whether voters early voted or voted on election day. The interactive voice response (IVR) surveys were conducted by University of New Orleans’ political science doctoral candidate, Anthony Licciardi, Jr. under the supervision of Dr. Edward Chervenak, Director of the University of New Orleans Survey Research Center. The sample size of 1,902 respondents yields a 2.25% margin of error with 95% confidence. Data for this survey was post-weighted on the race, gender, age, and congressional district parameters for the population of Louisiana registered voters.

About IVR Surveys

IVR surveys, also known as “robo-polls” employ an automated, recorded voice to call respondents who are asked to answer questions by punching telephone keys. Advantages of IVR surveys include their low cost, the almost immediate collection of data, and the simple and convenient processing of data. They also reduce interviewer bias to zero by eliminating the live human interviewer. Every survey respondent hears the same question read the same way. Independent analysis from publications such as *The Wall Street Journal* and National Council on Public Polls, have shown IVR surveys that are used to record candidate preferences have had an accuracy level comparable to live interviewer surveys (chismstrategies.com/case-studies/IVRSurveys).

When conducting IVR surveys, pollsters must not rely on some details of a call list, like a voter file. They cannot assume that the details of the person in the file is the individual who picks up the call. Demographic categories of race, age, gender, and political party identification must be self-reported by the respondent to ensure a valid and accurate analysis.

Post-Weighting

Ideally, the sample of respondents should reflect the population of interest. In other words, the sample from this survey should be representative of the population of Louisiana. An issue that can arise with IVR surveys is non-response, since some people may screen their calls or hang up when called. This may cause some groups to be over or under-represented. Because IVR surveying is prohibited by FCC rules from calling cell phone numbers, only VOIP (voice over internet protocol) and home phone numbers can be called. The growing trend of minority and younger households without land lines can result in a coverage error and sample bias. As such, no reliable conclusions can be drawn from the observed survey data unless the sample has been post-

weighted to correct for the lack of representativeness. It is imperative that survey analysts accurately post-weight the cases to reflect the demographics of the population of interest. In this instance this sample was post-weighted to reflect the age, race, and gender parameters of the population of Louisiana voters (in the 2016 presidential election) to reduce response errors and coverage error bias.

Method of Random Selection for November 3, 2016 Survey

A statewide voter file of all who voted early in Louisiana's 2016 US Presidential election was provided for this research. The file was downloaded into an MS Excel spreadsheet with rows of individual cases and columns of variables. Telephone numbers are one of the variable columns included in the file. The spreadsheet was filtered first by removing all cases without telephone numbers. Next, the spreadsheet was filtered by removing cases whose telephone numbers did not have enough digits (ten-digit phone numbers are required e.g. (123) 456-7890 for telephone surveying. A random number column was generated in the spreadsheet. The MS Excel random number generator formula "*=RAND()*" was used to create unique random numbers for each remaining case. Each unique random number was saved to each case row.

The cases were sorted into six separate files, in congruence with each case's US Congressional district variable (Louisiana has six US Congressional districts in 2016). Each of the six files was then sorted in descending order by the cases' individually assigned random numbers. The top 6,000 cases from each of the six congressional district files were taken as the random sample for each district. The files were uploaded to robodial.org. Robodial.org scrubbed the files to remove duplicate phone numbers and cellular phone numbers to comply with Federal Communication Commission (FCC) cellular phone calling compliance.

November 3, 2016 Survey Script.

1. This is a sixty second confidential university survey of Louisiana voters. Who will you vote for, for president? Press 1 for Democrat Hillary Clinton, press 2 for Republican Donald Trump, press 3 for someone else, press 4 for don't know.
2. Press 1 if you early voted, press 2 if you plan to vote on election day, press 3 if you plan to not vote. (if answer 1- go to question 3, if answer 2 or 3, go to question 4)
3. How did you get to the early voting site? Press 1 if you drove, press 2 if you got a ride from someone, press 3 if you took public transportation, press 4 if you walked.
4. If you identify as a Democrat press 1, a Republican press 2, something else press 3.
5. If you are widowed press 1, married press 2, divorced press 3, single press 4.
6. If your household income is less than \$45k, press 1, if your household income is more than \$45k press 2, if you don't know press 3. (Louisiana's median house hold income is \$45k)
7. If you are a graduate of a four-year college press 1, if you have attended college but have not graduated press 2, if you have never attended college press 3.
8. If you are male press 1, if you are female press 2.
9. If you are younger than fifty press 1, if you are older than 49 press 2. (Average age of LA voter is 50)
10. If you are black press 1, if you are white press 2, if you are something else press 3.
Thank you for taking the survey.

Method of Random Selection for March 21, 2017 Survey Script

A statewide voter file of all who voted on election day in Louisiana's 2016 US Presidential election was provided for this research by the Louisiana Secretary of State's office. We use the same procedure as we did for the method of random selection for the November 3, 2016 survey.

March 21, 2017 Survey Script

1. Who did you vote for - for President in last November's election? Press 1 for Hillary Clinton, press 2 for Donald Trump, press 3 for someone else, press 4 if you did not vote.

2. Press 1 if you early voted, press 2 if you voted on election day, press 3 if you did not vote.
3. Do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of President Donald Trump? Press 1 for approve, press 2 for disapprove, press 3 for don't know.
4. If you identify as a Democrat press 1, a Republican press 2, something else press 3.
5. If you are widowed press 1, married press 2, divorced press 3, single press 4.
6. If your household income is less than \$45k, press 1, if your household income is more than \$45k press 2, if you don't know press 3. (at the time of the survey, Louisiana's median house hold income is \$45k).
7. If you are a graduate of a four-year college press 1, if you have attended college but have not graduated press 2, if you have never attended college press 3.
8. If you are male press 1, if you are female press 2.
9. If you are younger than fifty press 1, if you are older than 49 press 2. (Average age of LA voter is 50)
10. If you are black press 1, if you are white press 2, if you are something else press 3.

-Thank you for taking the survey.

Survey Voice-Over

Wendy Remington of Sonata Solutions, LLC, a female voiceover professional, was hired to record voice-over files for each of the survey questions. Her accent is self-described as female, Caucasian, and mid-western. Prior to the IVR survey, test survey calls were sent to this researcher and to Dr. Edward Chervenak, Director of the University of New Orleans Survey Research Center for approval. The script, voice-over, and audio quality were deemed to be easily understood, unbiased, and clear.

Analysis of Voting Survey

An analysis of the survey's sample is expected to reveal relationships between age, gender, race, party identification, marital status, education attainment, and household income with the choice to early vote or to vote on election day. The survey's samples represent a

proportional combination of Louisiana voters who participated in the 2016 US Presidential Election during early voting and Election Day.

Method

This investigation combines data from two surveys of Louisiana voters in the 2016 election for US President. One survey polled early voters and was conducted on November 3, 2016 (early voting in Louisiana had concluded by Tuesday November 1, 2016). The second survey contained data from voters who voted on the Election Day, November 8, 2016, and was conducted on March 21, 2017. Both surveys produced a combined sample of 1,902 voters. Due to an error in the data recording, two cases are excluded from analysis with a 1,900 sample (499 early voters, 1401 election day voters) remaining in the data set.

Both surveys include data on each voter's marital status (married, divorced, widowed or single), household income (less than \$45k, more than \$45k, don't know), political party identification (Republican, Democratic, or other), educational attainment (no college, some college, 4-year college graduate), gender, age (younger than 50, 50 or older), and race (white, black, or other).

Analysis of Public Voting Profile

The effect of various voter demographics on the likelihood with early voting is investigated in an analysis of historical Louisiana voter data from twelve statewide elections between October 20, 2007 and December 10, 2016. The available public voter file data allows individual level testing for race, gender, age, and party registration as predictors for early voting.

All registered voters in Louisiana have public voter profiles with the Louisiana Secretary of State's office. This profile contains an individual's: name, residential address, mailing address, all of the political subdivisions they are qualified to vote in, telephone number, gender, age, race, and voting participation history for twenty past elections. This information is available to the

public and is regularly purchased by campaign candidates, pollsters, and researchers. For this investigation, data on each voter's race, gender, age, and party registration as well as their voting behavior (early voter or election day voter) is considered in this analysis.

This investigation examines historical election data from Louisiana in four statewide elections between October 2015 and December 2016. October 24, 2015 was the quadrennial gubernatorial election primary held on a Saturday. November 21, 2015 was a gubernatorial runoff election held on a Saturday. November 8, 2016 was the quadrennial presidential election held on a Tuesday. December 10, 2016 was a runoff election for US Senate held on a Saturday.

This research design employs Louisiana historical voting data of 5,242,997 individual cases over four consecutive statewide Louisiana elections and a survey of 1,902 Louisiana voters in the 2016 US presidential election. This data is used to estimate the effects of gender, age, race, political party registration, marital status, level of education, household income, and party identification variables on voting stage choice, in order to test the convenience hypothesis against the mobilization hypothesis.

Chapter 5. Data Analysis

This research seeks to find demographic differences between early voters and election-day voters. Population datasets, procured from the Louisiana Secretary of State's archives, provide basic demographic information about individual voters including sex, race, age, and political party registration. Four consecutive Louisiana statewide elections from 2015 and 2016 are analyzed on an individual level in the analyses. There are more than five-million individual cases analyzed in this dissertation. In addition to an analysis of the four election population datasets, a survey of 1,902 voters who participated in the November 8, 2016 U.S. presidential election in Louisiana was taken to examine a larger number of variables that are not available in the data from the secretary of state's office. Those variables are: household income, level of education, marital status, and political party identification (not party registration). We are interested in establishing whether certain demographic groups have an advantage or disadvantage in their turnout rates, even when voters have the option of voting early.

Early Voting by Race, Gender, and Party Registration

Early voting and election-day voting data from the Louisiana Secretary of State provide rationale for hypothesizing a convenience effect. In the four elections of interest, we see in Table 2 that non-white voters, male voters, and non-registered party voters realize a representation disadvantage among voters across all four elections. Non-white voters' disadvantages range from .9% to 5.4%. Male voters' disadvantages range from .7% to 1%. Non-registered party voters' disadvantages range from 1.3% to 8.7%. We calculate the disadvantage by subtracting the early-voting rates of voters who are non-white, male, and not registered with a major party from the early-voting rates of voters who are white, female, and registered with a major party, respectively.

When we consider the effect of age and voting stage choice over the four elections of interest, the median age is seven years older for early voters than for election-day voters. In the 2015 gubernatorial primary and runoff elections, early voting median age was sixty-two and election-day median age fifty-six, a six-year difference in age. In the 2016 presidential election, the early voting media age was fifty-seven and the election-day median age was forty-nine, an eight-year difference in age. In the December 2016 US Senate runoff-election, the median early voting age was seventy and the median election-day voting age was sixty-two, an eight-year difference.

It is also worth noting that the highest turnout in the elections of interest was the 2016 presidential and it realized the youngest median ages of both early voters and election-day voters. Furthermore, the lowest voter turnout election of the four resulted in the oldest median ages in both early voting and election day voting.

These empirical data reveal that when individual cases are aggregated, there are demographic group differences in who turnout to vote and when they choose to vote.

The following summarizations are the evidence-based results of the total populations of four consecutive statewide Louisiana elections between October 2015 and December 2016. At the top of the ballot of these elections was a US Presidential election, a gubernatorial primary, a gubernatorial runoff, and a U.S. Senate runoff.

Table 2. This table describes demographic categories and the early voting turnout advantage (Adv) of each category in the four elections of interest.

Category	12/10/2016	Adv	11/8/2016	Adv	11/21/2015	Adv	10/24/2015	Adv
White	21.9%	0.0%	26.8%	0.0%	23.6%	0.0%	21.3%	0.0%
Black	18.5%	-3.4%	21.6%	-5.2%	22.7%	-0.9%	19.6%	-3.4%
Other Race	18.1%	-3.8%	23.5%	-3.3%	19.0%	-4.6%	15.9%	-5.4%
Female	21.3%	0.0%	26.3%	0.0%	23.5%	0.0%	21.0%	0.0%
Male	20.3%	-1.0%	25.4%	-0.9%	22.8%	-0.7%	20.3%	-0.7%
Registered Republicans	22.8%	0.0%	29.4%	0.0%	24.7%	0.0%	24.6%	0.0%
Registered Democrats	20.4%	-2.4%	25.8%	-3.6%	23.4%	-1.3%	20.3%	-4.3%
Non-Registered Party	17.2%	-5.6%	20.7%	-8.7%	19.0%	-5.7%	17.1%	-7.5%
65+ (age)	30.8%	0.0%	36.7%	0.0%	31.7%	0.0%	28.1%	0.0%
50-64	18.0%	-12.8%	27.2%	-9.5%	22.2%	-9.5%	18.9%	-9.2%
35-49	12.3%	-18.5%	20.5%	-16.2%	16.4%	-15.3%	14.3%	-13.8%
18-34	12.9%	-17.9%	18.7%	-18.0%	15.8%	-15.9%	15.8%	-12.3%

Across four consecutive Louisiana statewide elections, white voters, female voters, and registered Republican voters outperform other socio-political demographic categories in early voting turnout rates. When measured within their own categories, white voters outperform black voters in the four statewide elections ranging from 0.9% to 5.2%. Female voters outperformed male voters ranging from 0.7% to 1%. Registered partisan voters also consistently outperform their nonpartisan counterparts in each of the four elections of interest. For the purpose of testing, this research combines both registered Democrats and registered Republicans into a category named “partisans” and all other voters as “nonpartisans”. Turnout among the four age-category groups consistently shows that the two older groups cast early votes at a much higher rate within their categories than do voters in the two younger groups. We see that the sixty-five and older group nearly doubles the early voting rates of voters between the ages of eighteen and forty-nine in each of the four elections of interest.

While it will not be tested in this analysis it is interesting to note that in the elections considered for this research, registered Republican voters outperform registered Democrat voters ranging from 1.3% to 4.3%. Registered Republicans outperformed “Other” registered voters ranging from 5.6% to 7.6%.

These results reflect that white, female, and registered Republican voters are taking the most advantage of early voting opportunities in Louisiana elections.

Age and Voting Stage

There is an obvious age difference in voting stage preference observed in Table 3 below. In the October 24, 2015 Louisiana gubernatorial primary, the median age of early voters was sixty-two and the median age of election-day voters was fifty-six, a six-year age difference. The same difference in median age is found in the November 21, 2015 gubernatorial runoff election where early voter median age is sixty-two and election day median age is fifty-six.

The November 8, 2016 presidential election produced significantly more voters than the 2015 statewide elections and the median age gap between election stages grew by two years. Early voter median age was fifty-seven and election day median age was forty-nine.

In the December 10, 2016 US Senate runoff election, early voters median age was sixty-five and election day voter median age was fifty-seven, an eight-year age gap.

Table 3. This table shows the side-by-side statistics of age and early voting and election day. The median difference is shown in the boxes to the right of each. Early voters are older than are election day voters

Early Voting Age Statistics			Election Day Age Statistics			
10/24/2015			10/24/2015			Median Difference 6 years
Personal_Age			Personal_Age			
N	Valid	234,703	N	Valid	899,903	
Mean		59.87	Mean		54.45	
Median		62	Median		56	
Mode		69	Mode		61	
11/21/2015			11/21/2015			Median Difference 6 years
Personal_Age			Personal_Age			
N	Valid	270,178	N	Valid	895,502	
Mean		60.09	Mean		54.23	
Median		62	Median		56	
Mode		69	Mode		61	
11/8/2016			11/8/2016			Median Difference 8 years
Personal_Age			Personal_Age			
N	Valid	531,388	N	Valid	1,518,174	
Mean		55.23	Mean		49.02	
Median		57	Median		49	
Mode		62	Mode		57	
12/10/2016			12/10/2016			Median Difference 8 years
Personal_Age			Personal_Age			
N	Valid	186,095	N	Valid	707,028	
Mean		62.78	Mean		55.18	
Median		65	Median		57	
Mode		70	Mode		62	

The scatter plots and trend lines seen in Figures #1-4 below, visually reveal what the data say. There is a positive relationship between age and early voting. As voters get older, they not only tend to turn out more than younger voters; they are also more likely to vote early.

In the 11/8/2016 US Presidential election (Figure 2.), there were 531,388 early voters and 1,518,180 Election Day voters. Young voters who participated at eighteen years old in early voting made up 20.1% within their overall age cohort who voted. As voters age from eighteen to

twenty-three, they dip to the lowest early voting participation rate of any age cohort at 17.6%. From age twenty-four to forty-one, early voting participation increases from 17.8% to 20%. From age forty-one to fifty-one, the percentage grows to 24%. From fifty-one to sixty-two, early voting within the age cohort rises to 30%. From sixty-two to seventy-two early voting participation increases to 36.5% within the age cohort. From seventy-two to ninety-two, early voting rises to 53.5% of the age cohort. From ninety-two to 101, the rate rises to its highest at 78.2%.

The cause of the dip in in early voting participation from eighteen to twenty-three may be associated with the social nature of voting with cohabitants (family) who regularly vote and who also have a habit of voting early. The parents of an eighteen-year-old will typically range from 36-60, which are higher probability early voters. When younger voters move away from home in their late teens and early twenties, whether it's for college or work, those familial voting traditions and habits wane. As twenty-four-year-olds finish college and/or become more established in a community as residents and workers, they change their addresses when renewing their government issued driving licenses and identification cards as they expire. Motor Voter gives them an opportunity to register to vote in their new community during this process. Instead of having to request a mail-in absentee ballot or travel further distances to vote, voting becomes easier and less expensive as voters get older and become more established in communities.

Figure 1. Percentage of Age Cohorts Who Voted Early in the Louisiana U.S. Senate Runoff December 10, 2016

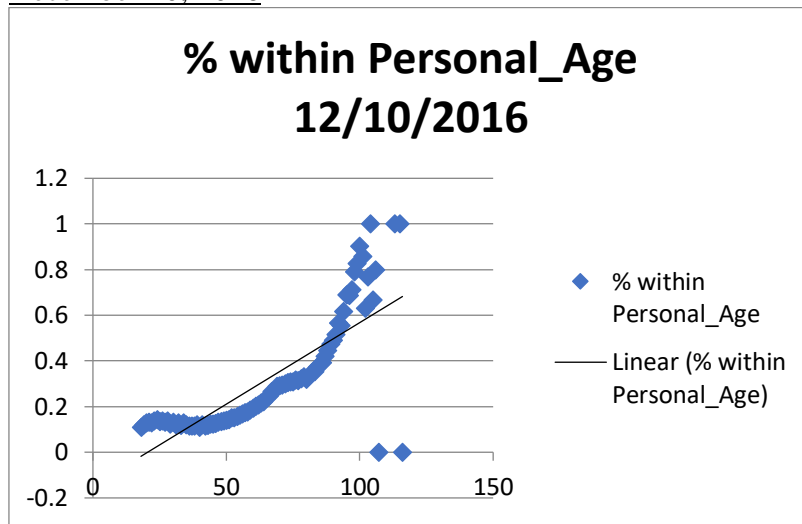


Figure 2. Percentage of Age Cohorts Who Voted Early in the U.S. Presidential Election in Louisiana November 8, 2016.

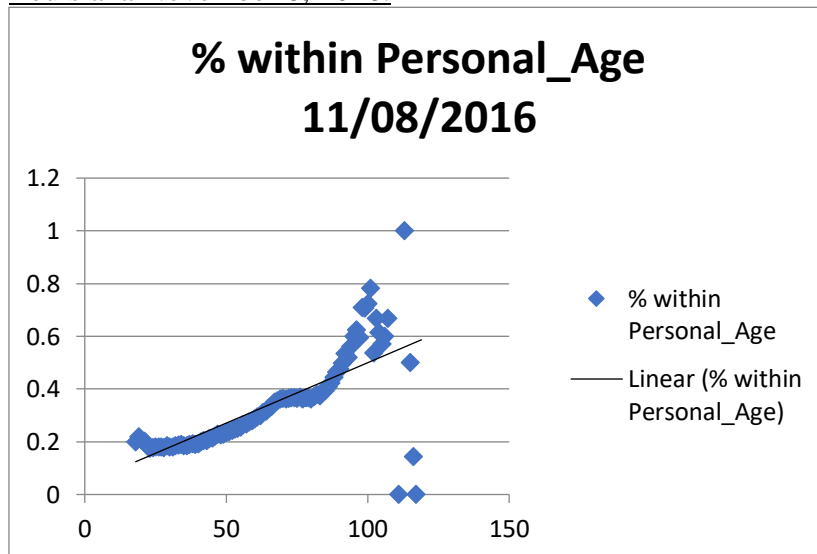


Figure 3. Percentage of Age Cohorts Who Voted Early in the Louisiana Gubernatorial Runoff November 21, 2015

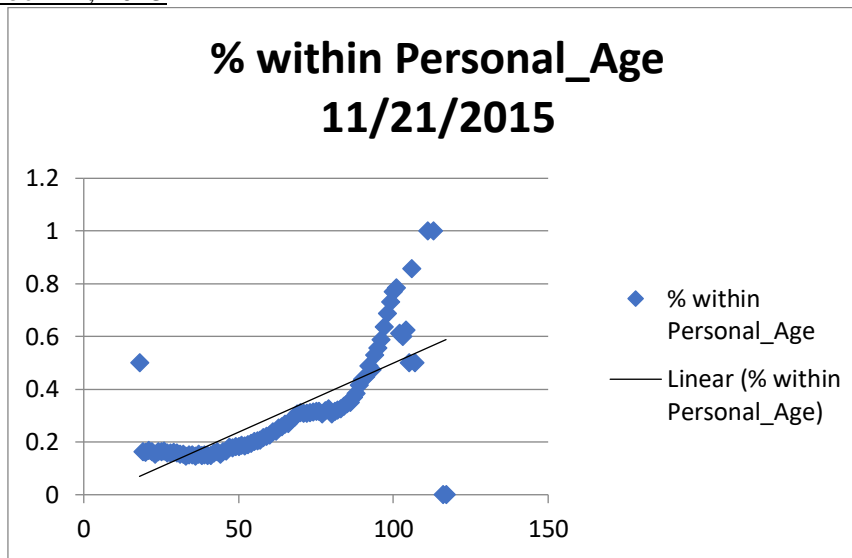
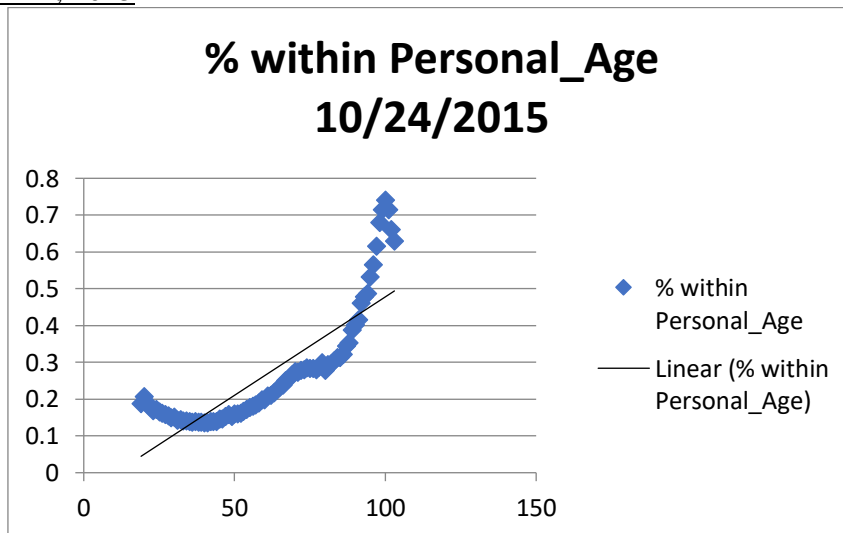


Figure 4. Percentage of Age Cohorts Who Voted Early in the Louisiana Gubernatorial Primary October 24, 2015



Early Voting by Education, Income, Marital Status, and Partisanship

Because the Louisiana Secretary of State's office does not include voter file demographics on individual voter educational attainment, household income, marital status or party ID (as opposed to party registration), a survey was conducted of 1902 randomly selected

Louisiana voters who voted in the November 8, 2016 U.S. presidential election to collect this information. Below in Table 4 are the results within each demographic category for participation in early voting.

Table 4. Early Vote Turnout Within Category

Demographic	Survey of 11/8/2016 Voters	Advantage
College Grad	29.6%	0.0%
Some College	27.0%	-2.6%
No College	18.4%	-11.2%
DEM ID	27.5%	0.0%
REP ID	25.8%	-1.7%
OTH ID	24.5%	-3.0%
Widowed	29.1%	0.0%
Married	26.0%	-3.1%
Divorced	26.8%	-2.3%
Unmarried	23.4%	-5.7%
HHI \$45k+	28.6%	0.0%
HHI \$45K-	23.1%	-5.5%
Don't Know HHI	24.4%	-4.2%

The early voting rate among college-educated voters is 11.2 percentage points higher than that of voters with no college education. Voters who are college graduates are 61% more likely to early vote than are voters with no college education.

Unlike party registration where registered Republicans have a 2.9% average advantage over registered Democrats (Table 2 above), party ID in the survey shows a 1.7%-point (Table 4 above) advantage for Democrat Party identifiers in early voting over Republican Party identifiers. While party registration is an objective measure in the secretary of state's voter file analysis, party identification is a more esoteric and fluid measure. Non-registered party and/or swing voters may identify with one of the major parties or candidates in one election cycle and then with the other party or another candidate in the next election. The empirical data from each of the elections of interest in this research show that nonpartisans (voters who are not registered as

Democrats or Republicans) do not turn out to vote at as high of rates as do partisan voters.

Voters registered as “no party”, Independent Party, Reform Party, Green Party, Libertarian Party, and “other” are all categorized as nonpartisan.

Widowed voters are more likely to be early voters than married, divorced, and unmarried voters. Single voters are less likely to vote early than all others. Divorced voters are slightly more likely to vote than married voters (0.8%). Widowed voters are more likely to vote early than unmarried voters by 5.7 percentage points; their early-voting rate is 3.1 percentage points higher than that of married voters, and 2.3 percentage points higher than the rate for voters who are divorced (Appendix A).

Additionally, voters in households above median income are more likely to vote early than voters who live in less than median income households by 5.5%.

These perfunctory analyses of the raw survey data reveal an expected direction in which a convenience effect would be found, inasmuch as early voting participation of demographics consistent with overall voting participation. These data are analyzed for statistical significance in the next section of this chapter.

Multivariate Analyses of Four Statewide Louisiana Elections

Election #1 Abstract - Louisiana Gubernatorial Primary, October 24, 2015

The 2015 Louisiana gubernatorial primary was the first competitive (a primary resulting in a runoff) gubernatorial election in Louisiana since 2003. The 2015 gubernatorial primary, a jungle primary where nine candidates ran together regardless of party affiliation, featured several well-known Louisiana Republicans; U.S. Senator David Vitter, Public Service Commissioner Scott Angelle, and Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne were on the ballot with only one well-funded legitimate moderate Democrat, then State Representative John Bel Edwards. Voter turnout was 39% with Democrat John Bel Edwards receiving 40% of the votes and Republican David Vitter

getting 23%. Angelle came in with 19%, Dardenne 15%, and the remaining candidates each came in with 1% or fewer votes. Vitter would face Edwards in a November 2015 runoff.

Louisiana gubernatorial primary and runoff elections historically see 40% turnout rates. Gubernatorial elections generally produce the second highest turnouts in Louisiana behind U.S. presidential elections. An exception would have been the 2014 U.S. Senate election between Mary Landrieu and Bill Cassidy which turned out 54% in the primary and 44% in the runoff. Cassidy won the runoff election 56% to 44%.

Although theoretical expectations among proponents of early-voting laws are that early voting will lead to higher turnout among historically underrepresented voters, prior research and a review of the empirical data of this election suggest that this is not the case. We predict here that early voting will produce a convenience effect where those voters who are more likely to vote in an election will also be more likely to early vote.

Table 5. ELECTION #1 Gubernatorial Primary, October 24, 2015

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	Sex	.009	.002	30.016	1	.000	1.009
	Race	.087	.005	284.009	1	.000	1.091
	PARTISANS	.155	.007	491.844	1	.000	1.167
	Age (Median 57)	.596	.005	15188.097	1	.000	1.816
	Constant	-1.875	.008	57180.685	1	.000	.153
chi-square=2746.8; p<.000 N=1,134,612							

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Sex, Race, PARTISANS, Median Age. $P<.001$ Sex, $P<.001$ Race, $P<.001$ PARTISANS, $P<.001$ Age

Binary dummy variables were created for the variables sex, race, party registration (DEM and REP), and partisans for this analysis. For Sex, female =1 and male=0; Race, white =1 and nonwhite =0; Partisans, registered Democrats and registered Republicans =1 and nonpartisans =0, Age fifty-seven and older=1 younger than fifty-seven=0.

A binary logistic regression analysis was conducted on 1,134,606 voters in the October 24, 2015 Louisiana gubernatorial primary. Female voters were slightly more likely to early vote than males (1.009). White voters were 9.1% more likely to vote early than non-white voters. Partisan registered voters were also 16.7% more likely to be early voters than voters who were not registered as Democrats or Republicans. Voters older than the median-voter age of fifty-seven were 81.6% more likely to early vote than younger than median age voters were.

Election #2 Abstract - Louisiana Gubernatorial Runoff November 21, 2015

The November 21, 2015 Louisiana gubernatorial runoff election pitted Republican U.S. Senator David Vitter against Democrat State Representative John Bel Edwards. Conventional wisdom was that the *battle royale* would see primary Republican candidates and voters coalesce behind Vitter, however, this did not happen. The primary campaign saw a deluge of negative ads from Republicans against Vitter. Vitter skipped out on most of the primary debates and was maligned by his fellow Republicans for not showing up and about his personal and seedy issues during his tenure in public offices. Not only did those Republicans not coalesce behind Vitter in the runoff, the Edwards campaign was able to use footage and sound bites from the debates where well-known Republicans were deriding Vitter and his many personal problems.

Thirty-eight thousand more voters showed up to vote in the November 21, 2015 gubernatorial runoff than did in the October primary. Edwards defeated Vitter 56% to 44%.

Once again, while theoretical expectations are that early voting will manifest a mobilization effect, the dataset for this election suggests that voters who would normally vote are also more likely to early vote, thus we predict that there will be a convenience effect realized in the analysis.

Table 6. ELECTION #2 Gubernatorial Runoff, November 21, 2015

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	SEX	.054	.004	145.756	1	.000	1.056
	RACE	.016	.005	11.443	1	.001	1.016
	PARTISANS	.164	.007	611.352	1	.000	1.178
	Age (Median 57)	.646	.005	19707.191	1	.000	1.907
	Constant	-	.008	50994.075	1	.000	.175
		1.741					
	chi-square=2538.9; p<.000 N=1,165,686						

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: SEX, RACE, PARTISANS, Median Age. $P<.001$ Sex, $P<.001$ Race, $P<.002$, PARTISANS, $P<.001$ Age

Binary dummy variables were created for the variables sex, race, party registration (DEM and REP), and partisans for this analysis. For Sex, female =1 and male=0; Race, white =1 and nonwhite =0; Partisans, registered Democrats and registered Republicans =1 and nonpartisans =0, Median Age fifty-seven and older=1 younger than fifty-seven=0.

A binary logistic regression analysis was conducted on 1,165,686 voters in the November 21, 2015 Louisiana gubernatorial runoff. Females were 5.6% more like to vote early than males. White voters were 1.6% more likely to vote early than non-white voters. Consistent with the findings in the previous two statewide election analyses, partisan voters were 17.8% more likely to early vote than nonpartisans. Voters older than the median-voter age of fifty-seven were 90.7% more likely to early vote than younger than median age voters were.

Election #3 Abstract - Louisiana U.S. Presidential Election November 8, 2016

The November 8, 2016 presidential election featured Democrat Hillary Clinton against Republican Donald Trump. Louisiana is (at the time of this dissertation) considered a reliably “red” Republican state, even though it had recently elected a Democratic governor in 2015. Hillary Clinton received 38% of the votes and Donald Trump received 58%. There was 68%

turnout for this election, which has been the turnout rate for the past three presidential elections in Louisiana. If any of the four statewide Louisiana elections analyzed in this dissertation would reveal a mobilization effect resulting in a more diverse turnout in early voting, the U.S. presidential election with customarily higher turnout should reveal just that.

Table 7. ELECTION #3 U.S. Presidential Election in Louisiana, November 8, 2016

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	Sex	.067	.003	418.095	1	.000	1.069
	Race	.109	.004	969.966	1	.000	1.115
	PARTISANS	.244	.004	3302.615	1	.000	1.277
	Age (Median 52)	.594	.003	32008.177	1	.000	1.811
	Constant	-1.679	.005	106931.105	1	.000	.187
	chi-square=11611.7; p<.000 N=2,049,570						

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Personal_Sex, Personal_Race, PARTISANS, Age. $P<.001$ Sex, $P<.001$ Race, $P<.001$ PARTISANS, $P<.001$ Age

Binary dummy variables were created for the variables sex, race, party registration (DEM and REP), and partisans for this analysis. For Sex, female =1 and male=0; Race, white =1 and nonwhite =0; Partisans, registered Democrats and registered Republicans =1 and nonpartisans =0, Age fifty-two and older=1 younger than fifty-two=0.

A binary logistic regression analysis was conducted on 2,049,570 voters in the November 8, 2016 US Presidential Election in Louisiana. Females were 6.9% more likely to vote early than males. White voters were 11.5% more likely to vote early than non-white voters. This analysis also finds that partisans were 27.7% more likely to early vote than were nonpartisan voters. Voters older than the median-voter age of fifty-two were 81.1% more likely to early vote than younger than median age voters were.

Election #4 Abstract – U.S. Senate Runoff in Louisiana, December 10, 2016

Unlike most states, Louisiana's primary for the 2016 U.S. Senate race was in November, which resulted in a December 2016 runoff, a month after the U.S. presidential election. While this was a regular election cycle to fill the seat of outgoing U.S. Senator David Vitter, it was in some respects a special election and was the only statewide race on the ballot. The field had narrowed from the twenty-four candidates, on the November jungle primary ballot, to Democrat Foster Campbell and Republican John N. Kennedy for the December runoff. The turnout was 30.75% statewide. In this type of lower turnout election, the theoretical mobilization effect would not be expected to be as pronounced as it would be in higher turnout races.

As with our expectations of the previous elections, we predict here that a convenience effect will manifest itself where white voters, female voters, and registered partisan voters will be found to be more likely to early vote than their counterparts.

Table 8. ELECTION #4 U.S. Senate Runoff in Louisiana, December 10, 2016

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	SEX	.089	.005	278.706	1	.000	1.093
	RACE	.151	.006	643.066	1	.000	1.163
	PARTISANS	.124	.008	244.274	1	.000	1.133
	Age (Median 59)	.842	.006	23008.387	1	.000	2.320
	Constant	-2.075	.009	47856.871	1	.000	.126
chi-square=27203.6; p<.000 N=893,129							

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: SEX, RACE, PARTISANS, Age. $P<.001$ Sex, $P<.001$ Race, $P<.001$ PARTISANS, $P<.001$ Age

Binary dummy variables were created for the variables sex, race, party registration (DEM and REP), and partisans for this analysis. For sex, female =1 and male=0; Race, white =1 and

nonwhite =0; Partisans, registered Democrats and registered Republicans =1 and nonpartisans =0,
Age fifty-nine and older=1 younger than fifty-nine=0

A binary logistic regression analysis was conducted on 893,129 voters in the October 24, 2015 Louisiana gubernatorial primary. Females were 9.3% more likely to vote early than males. White voters were 16.3% more likely to vote early than non-white voters. As with the three other elections analyzed here, registered partisan voters were more likely to be early voters by 13.3% compared to nonpartisan voters. Voters older than the median-voter age of fifty-nine were more than twice as likely to early vote (132%) than younger-than-median-age voters were.

Multivariate Analysis of Survey Data from the 2016 Presidential Election

The final multivariate analysis is based on survey data collected from Louisiana voters who voted in the 2016 presidential election, in order to estimate a more comprehensive model that includes variables not available in the data from the Office of the Secretary of State.

Table 9. Presidential Election in Louisiana November 8, 2016

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	Gender	-.073	.099	.547	1	.459	.930
	Age_Cat	.099	.152	.430	1	.512	1.105
	Race	-.064	.116	.305	1	.581	.938
	HHI	-.001	.002	.666	1	.414	.999
	PARTYID	.257	.134	3.705	1	.054	1.293
	Marital Stat	.098	.217	.203	1	.652	1.103
	EDU	.597	.117	26.131	1	.000	1.817
	Constant	-.200	.290	.476	1	.490	.819
chi-square=26.16; p<.000 n=1,902							

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Gender, Age_Cat, Race, HHI, PARTYID, Marital Stat, EDU.

n=1,902. $P<.001$ EDU, $P=.054$ PARTYID

The variables for this analysis were coded as follows: dependent variable stage of voting –

early voting=1 election day=0, independent variables - gender – female = 1 male = 0, age - older than forty-nine = 1 younger than fifty = 0, race – white = 1 non-white = 0, household income (HHI) - over \$45K = 1 under \$45K = 0, party identification - partisan (Democratic and Republican) identifiers=1 non-partisan or other party=0, marital status – married = 1 not married=0, EDU college graduate = 1 non-college graduate = 0.

A binary logistic regression analysis was conducted on a random sample of 1,902 Louisiana voters who voted in the November 8, 2016 US presidential elections. Statistical significance was found in early voting participation by voters who graduated from college. Educational attainment (EDU) is expected to be a significant indicator in voting participation and is thus expected to be an indicator of early voting participation in a convenience effect. This test reveals significance where college educated were 83.6% more likely to early vote than those who had not graduated from college.

Barely over the standard .05 standard threshold for statistical significance, political party identification $P = .054$. It is worth noting that political party registration is not the same as political party identification. Although a voter may register as a member of a political party, when they are asked if they identify as a Democrat, Republican, or something else, they may answer “something else,” thus resulting in the difference we find between a significance that is found in actual party registration versus the lack of significance with party identification.

A convenience effect expectation is that marital status will be a significant indicator of early voting, however, it was not found to be a significant variable in this test. Married voters were not statistically more likely to early vote than non-married voters. Household income was also an expected convenience effect indicator, but it too was found to have no statistical significance in this analysis. Voters with higher the median household income were not statistically more likely to vote than were voters with lower than median household incomes.

Unlike the multivariate regression analyses of the population datasets of the four elections of interest, the survey dataset of the November 8, 2016 U.S. presidential election does not reveal a statistical significance of the variables sex, age, or race, when controlling for all other variables

Population Dataset Findings

This research reveals that a convenience effect in early voting has occurred in four consecutive statewide Louisiana elections from 2015 to 2016. Not only are white voters more likely to vote, they are also more likely to vote early. Female voters are more likely to early vote than male voters, and registered partisans are more likely to vote early than are nonpartisans, and older voters are more likely to vote than are younger voters.

These findings are congruent with convenience effect expectations and with previous research. These findings were derived from population datasets and are empirical evidence that early voting in Louisiana widens the chasm between specific groups of voters. Early voting leads to a dilution of non-white voters, younger voters, male voters, and nonpartisan voters.

Survey Dataset Findings

The survey analysis of the November 8, 2016 U.S. presidential election of Louisiana voters shows congruity with a convenience effect in early voting in the category of education (EDU). College graduates are statistically 87% more likely to be early voters than are non-college graduates. Partisan identification significance is barely over the $P < .05$ standard threshold for statistical significance at $P = .054$ where partisans are nearly 30 percentage points more likely to early vote than are nonpartisans (Magleby et al, 2011). It is possible, and even likely, that survey respondents who identified themselves as nonpartisans in the survey, are actually registered partisans (Keith et al, 1986, Magleby et al, 2011, Powell, 1988)

No significant difference was found in the survey sample of voters' early voting participation as it relates to their marital status, household income, sex, age, or race. This is in

contrast to the findings of the population dataset analyses where sex, race, and age are all found to be statistically significant in the direction of a convenience effect. The conflict may be a result of voter age being coded 1 for voters older than forty-nine and 0 for voters younger than fifty in the survey analysis. This binary coding was used because the survey instrument asked voters to select a category of either “younger than fifty” or “older than forty-nine” (the average age of registered voter in November 2016 was fifty) instead of asking their actual age. In the four election population datasets, the binary age coding was based upon the median age of those who voted in each election. The reduced number of statistically significant variables in the analysis of survey data may also be attributable to the large number of cases in the state’s population datasets, since large-N analyses are generally more likely to result in statistical significance of the variables. Taken all together, though, both the examination of simple bivariate relationships between each variable and the stage that voters voted, and the multivariate logistic regression analyses, provide more evidence of a convenience effect than of a mobilization effect.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This dissertation examined over five-million individual cases of Louisiana voters across four consecutive statewide elections in 2015 and 2016. The types of elections were: a presidential election, a gubernatorial primary, a gubernatorial runoff, and a US senatorial runoff. A convenience effect was found across all demographic variables available in the public voter file in all four elections. Older voters, white voters, female voters, and partisan registered voters were all found to be significantly more likely to early vote than their counterparts.

In a survey of 1,902 voters, who voted in the 2016 presidential election, educational attainment was found to be a significant indicator in early voting choice. College graduates are found to be significantly more likely to early vote than voters with only some college education and with voters who had no college education. Marital status, household income and other variables in the model were not found to be significant indicators of whether or not a voter would early vote.

Early voting in Louisiana has a convenience effect, and not the theoretical mobilization effect sought by early-voting proponents, on turnout rates among marginalized socio-political and demographic groups of eligible voters. While intended theoretical expectations by reducing costs and maximizing efficacy (Downs, 1957, Riker and Obershook, 1968) are that expanding early voting opportunities should expand an electorate's diversity, this has not been the case in four consecutive Louisiana statewide elections between 2015 and 2016. Early voting policy changes and expansions of early voting opportunities in Louisiana have exacerbated socio-political cleavages in voter turnout in the categories of: age, race, gender political party registration, and level of education. Perhaps historically marginalized non-voters are acting upon economic rational choice rather than efficacy, D-term, or consciousness of rights motivations. If their

policy preferences are only marginally different than those who do vote, as posited by researchers (Martin, 2003, Highton and Wolfinger 2001; Teixeira 1992; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980), they may simply believe that their votes really don't matter and their scarce resource of time is better spent on something else.

Early voting in Louisiana has not increased overall voter turnout rates, however, it has nearly doubled early-voting participation since the implementation of no-excuse in person early voting (Appendix O). The same SES voters continue to turnout in similar rates as they had before early-voting expansions were implemented.

Extant studies reveal that education continues to be a significant variable, not only in voting behavior, but more precisely, early voting. College educated voters are the most reliable category of voters. One's ability to efficiently consume, retain, and analyze more complex themes and policy implications reduces their cost to vote (Schlozman et al, 1999; Nie, 1996; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). Besides the reduction in cost to vote, these voters are likely motivated by the D-term (Riker, 1968). They are more likely to find themselves in elite social and academic settings where they are more likely to be in contact with elected officials or bureaucratic policy influencers, thus increasing a feeling of efficacy or a pressure to comply with social norms of political participation i.e. voting (Nie, 1996).

Automatic mail-in absentee balloting in Louisiana, implemented in 2017, for voters who are older than sixty-four, is the latest early voting expansion in Louisiana. This intervention may lead to deeper inequities in future turn out rates as more voters become aware of the program. Louisiana's older voters are whiter, more female, have more education, and have higher registration rates with the two major political parties, than do their younger counterparts.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures' website
<https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/early-voting-in-state-elections.aspx> (last

accessed February 19, 2020), Louisiana, forty-three other states, and Washington DC currently employ some form of early voting, be it mail-in balloting or in-person early voting. For the most part, early voting interventions and expansions have been implemented with expectations that they would expand participation opportunities for groups of voters who find it inconvenient or impossible to vote in a single-day election scenario. Early voting is supposed to create a mobilization effect whereby those who actually vote are representative of the political subdivision where they vote. Ideally, voter turnout ratios of socio-political demographics of sex, age, and race will be reflective of a district's overall socio demographic makeup.

There are other measures that could be considered to increase turnout in a way that a mobilization effect might be achieved, like early voting on Sundays. In Louisiana, voters who are at least sixty-five can make a one-time request that a mail-in ballot be mailed to them for every election (until they die). If any voter, regardless of age, could make that same request, voters eighteen to sixty-four would have the same opportunity. This, however, would increase the administrative cost of voting while running a parallel system with normal voting activity (Montjoy, 2010). Another consideration would be to have two-day elections e.g. Saturday and Sunday election days where voters can vote at their local precinct polling sites, closer to where they live.

Providing non-traditional polling locations at retail outlets and medical centers have proven to be effective methods of increasing participation (Giammo and Brox, 2010, Stein and Vonnahme, 2008) and representativeness in voter turnout. Perhaps decision makers should consider options like this if a mobilization effect on turn out rates is desired.

In-person early voting sites in Louisiana are available at limited locations. Voters without personal transportation or a meaningful public transportation system are disadvantaged in this respect. Furthermore, early voting offices are traditionally located in government agency

buildings like courthouses and sheriff substations, with law enforcement presences. As an administrator in the judicial industrial complex, I see, anecdotally, that this practice has an intimidation effect on less educated, minority, lower household income, and younger voters. Voters with outstanding misdemeanor and traffic warrants for failing to appear, or who cannot afford to clear up their business with the court, intentionally avoid these types of institutions, thus avoiding an opportunity to early vote or vote at all. Early voting precinct locations should be available in less intimidating locations like traditional election day precincts such as schools, playgrounds, churches, and fire stations.

Some voters see voting as a privilege, some see it as a duty, and others see it as a right. Some people see not-voting as their right. Regardless of one's perspective on voting or not voting, the opportunity and availability to vote should be equal. As the cost of voting to an individual is reduced, the cost to voting administration increases in the allocation of scarce public resources of equipment, supplies, and personnel. If the goal of decreasing the cost of voting to individuals by providing early voting opportunities is to create a more representative turnout, periodic testing of the outcomes should and can be carried out to determine if the desired results are being realized or if there are unintended consequences of such policy experiments. This research finds empirical evidence, contrary to rational choice and economic theory (Downs, 1957; Riker, 1968), that early voting expansions in Louisiana have not led to a more mobilized and representative electorate in four consecutive statewide elections, conversely, a convenience effect has been found with the expansion of early voting opportunities. Older, more educated, partisan, female, and white voters are taking the most advantages of early voting.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A. Early-voting turnout and advantage within each category of the 2016 presidential election survey sample.

Early Vote Turnout Within Category		
Demographic		Advantage
College Grad	29.6%	0.0%
Some College	27.0%	-2.6%
No College	18.4%	-11.2%
DEM ID	27.5%	0.0%
REP ID	25.8%	-1.7%
OTH ID	24.5%	-3.0%
Widowed	29.1%	0.0%
Married	26.0%	-3.1%
Divorced	26.8%	-2.3%
Unmarried	23.4%	-5.7%
HHI \$45k+	28.6%	0.0%
HHI \$45K-	23.1%	-5.5%
Don't Know HHI	24.4%	-4.2%

Appendix B. Top of the ballot: U.S. Senate Runoff

	on 12/1/2016		on 12/10/2016			
	# REGISTERED	% of Registered	# VOTED	% of Eligible Within Category Who Voted	% of Voted	Advantage
Categories	2,904,858		893129	30.75%		
FEMALE	1,596,712	54.97%	481304	30.14%	53.89%	98.04%
MALE	1,307,475	45.01%	411731	31.49%	46.10%	102.42%
DEM	1,331,745	45.85%	426253	32.01%	47.73%	104.10%
REP	819,030	28.20%	332639	40.61%	37.24%	132.09%
OTHER PARTY	754,083	25.96%	134237	17.80%	15.03%	57.90%
BLACK	909,285	31.30%	242860	26.71%	27.19%	86.87%
WHITE	1,860,759	64.06%	622351	33.45%	69.68%	108.78%
OTHER RACE	134,814	4.64%	27918	20.71%	3.13%	67.35%
18/20	79,249	2.73%	14348	18.10%	1.61%	58.89%
21/34	715,328	24.63%	91164	12.74%	10.21%	41.45%
35/44	478,470	16.47%	98918	20.67%	11.08%	67.24%
45/54	517,595	17.82%	154470	29.84%	17.30%	97.07%
55/64	526,961	18.14%	221590	42.05%	24.81%	136.77%
65+	587,184	20.21%	312633	53.24%	35.00%	173.17%

Appendix C. Top of the ballot: Presidential

	on 11/1/2016		on 11/8/2016			
	# REGISTERED	% of Registered	# VOTED	% of Eligible Within Category Who Voted	% of Voted	Advantage
Categories	3,022,075		2,049,570	67.82%		
FEMALE	1,658,999	54.90%	1,159,394	69.89%	56.57%	103.05%
MALE	1,362,429	45.08%	889,862	65.31%	43.42%	96.31%
DEM	1,344,703	44.50%	918,524	68.31%	44.82%	100.72%
REP	898,254	29.72%	697,060	77.60%	34.01%	114.42%
OTHER PARTY	779,118	25.78%	433,986	55.70%	21.17%	82.13%
BLACK	940,807	31.13%	583,921	62.07%	28.49%	91.52%
WHITE	1,931,306	63.91%	1,380,767	71.49%	67.37%	105.42%
OTHER RACE	149,962	4.96%	84,882	56.60%	4.14%	83.46%
18/20	105,346	3.49%	58,054	55.11%	2.83%	81.26%
21/34	740,764	24.51%	398,892	53.85%	19.46%	79.40%
35/44	497,768	16.47%	317,111	63.71%	15.47%	93.93%
45/54	523,589	17.33%	329,001	62.84%	16.05%	92.65%
55/64	541,130	17.91%	461,656	85.31%	22.52%	125.79%
65+	613,422	20.30%	484,848	79.04%	23.66%	116.54%

Appendix D. Top of the ballot: Gubernatorial Runoff

	on 11/1/2015		on 11/21/2015			
	# REGISTERED	% of Registered	# VOTED	% of Eligible Within Category Who Voted	% of Voted	Advantage
Categories	2,899,568		1,165,686	40.20%		
FEMALE	1,593,865	55%	645,598	40.51%	55.38%	100.75%
MALE	1,305,028	45%	519,956	39.84%	44.61%	99.11%
DEM	1,332,002	46%	592,086	44.45%	50.79%	110.57%
REP	815,853	28%	396,703	48.62%	34.03%	120.95%
OTHER PARTY	751,713	26%	176,897	23.53%	15.18%	58.54%
BLACK	907,895	31%	353,329	38.92%	30.31%	96.80%
WHITE	1,857,338	64%	778,690	41.93%	66.80%	104.29%
OTHER RACE	134,335	5%	33,667	25.06%	2.89%	62.34%
18/20	78,869	3%	15,407	19.53%	1.32%	48.59%
21/34	714,744	25%	133,200	18.64%	11.43%	46.36%
35/44	477,484	16%	144,123	30.18%	12.36%	75.08%
45/54	517,530	18%	218,440	42.21%	18.74%	104.99%
55/64	526,017	18%	286,767	54.52%	24.60%	135.61%
65+	584,852	20%	367,743	62.88%	31.55%	156.41%

Appendix E. Top of the ballot: Gubernatorial Primary

	on 10/1/2015		on 10/24/2015			
	# REGISTERED	% of Registered	# VOTED	% of Eligible Within Category Who Voted	% of Voted	Advantage
Categories	2,893,292		1,134,606	39.22%		
FEMALE	1,590,428	54.97%	626,562	39.40%	55.22%	100.46%
MALE	1,302,186	45.01%	507,914	39.00%	44.77%	99.46%
DEM	1,331,186	46.01%	569,932	42.81%	50.23%	109.18%
REP	813,397	28.11%	390,455	48.00%	34.41%	122.41%
OTHER PARTY	748,709	25.88%	174,225	23.27%	15.36%	59.34%
BLACK	905,965	31.31%	319,224	35.24%	28.14%	89.85%
WHITE	1,853,567	64.06%	784,872	42.34%	69.18%	107.98%
OTHER RACE	133,760	4.62%	30,516	22.81%	2.69%	58.18%
18/20	78,346	2.71%	14,049	17.93%	1.24%	45.73%
21/34	714,013	24.68%	128,991	18.07%	11.37%	46.07%
35/44	476,633	16.47%	142,525	29.90%	12.56%	76.25%
45/54	517,684	17.89%	215,097	41.55%	18.96%	105.95%
55/64	524,699	18.13%	278,105	53.00%	24.51%	135.16%
65+	581,843	20.11%	355,839	61.16%	31.36%	155.95%

Column Descriptions

Categories- Demographic categories of registered voters.

Registered- The number of registered voters in Louisiana on November 1, 2016.

% of Registered- The percentage of registered voters in each category.
= (Category # REGISTERED) ÷ (Total # REGISTERED)

VOTED- The # of registered voters that voted.

% of Eligible Within Category Who Voted- The percentage of category voter turnout.
= (# of Voted) ÷ (# REGISTERED)

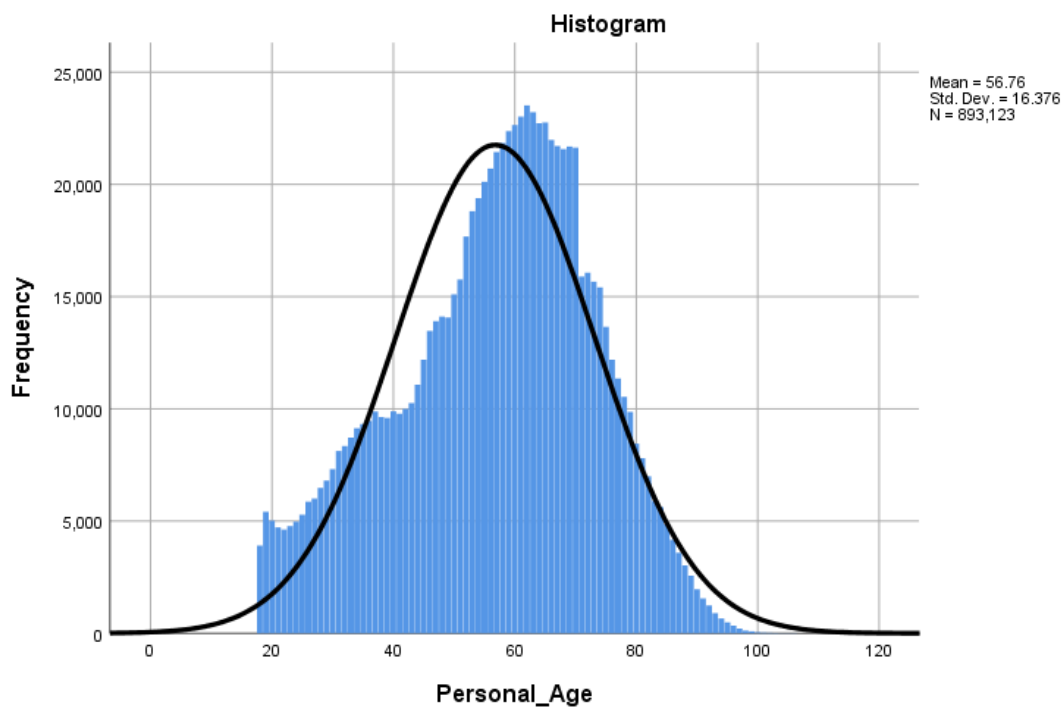
% of Voted- The turnout percentage of a category compared to other categories.
= (Category # VOTED) ÷ (Total # VOTED)

Advantage- The magnitudinal advantage that one category has compared to the overall turnout rate (68%).
= (% of Voted) ÷ (% of Registered Voters)

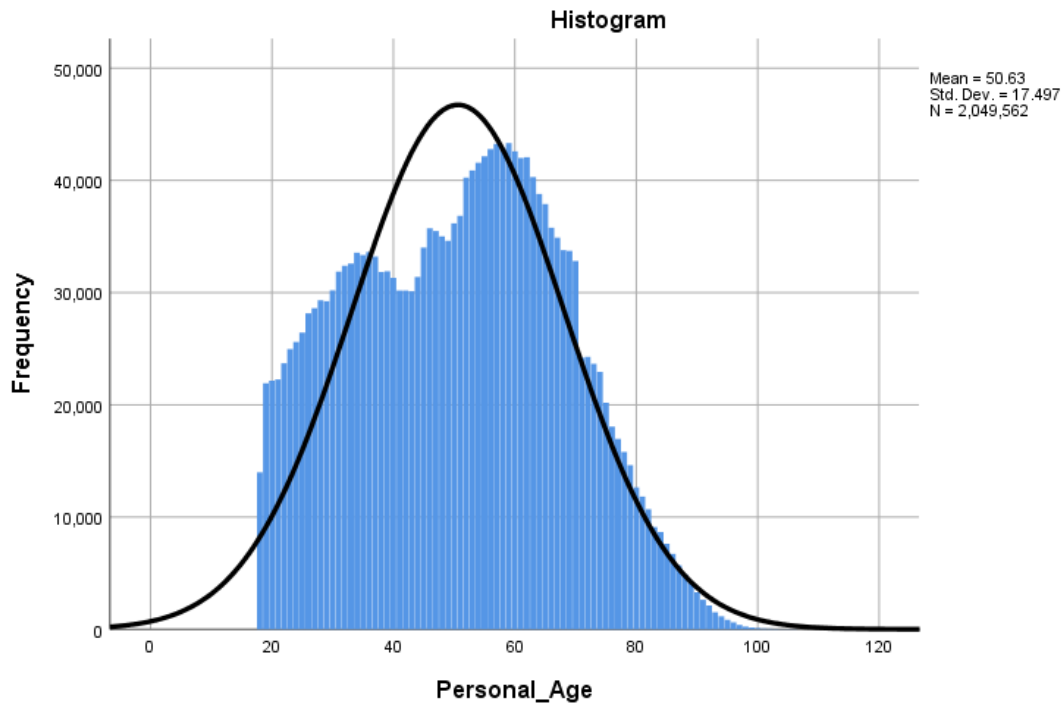
Appendix F. Calculating ADVANTAGE - Table for Categories

ADVANTAGE over 4 elections					
Categories	12/10/2016	11/8/2016	11/21/2015	10/24/2015	Score
FEMALE	-	+	+	+	3
MALE	+	-	-	-	0
DEM	+	+	+	+	4
REP	+	+	+	+	4
OTHER PARTY	-	-	-	-	0
BLACK	-	-	-	-	0
WHITE	+	+	+	+	4
OTHER RACE	-	-	-	-	0
18/20	-	-	-	-	0
21/34	-	-	-	-	0
35/44	-	-	-	-	0
45/54	-	-	+	+	2
55/64	+	+	+	+	4
65+	+	+	+	+	4

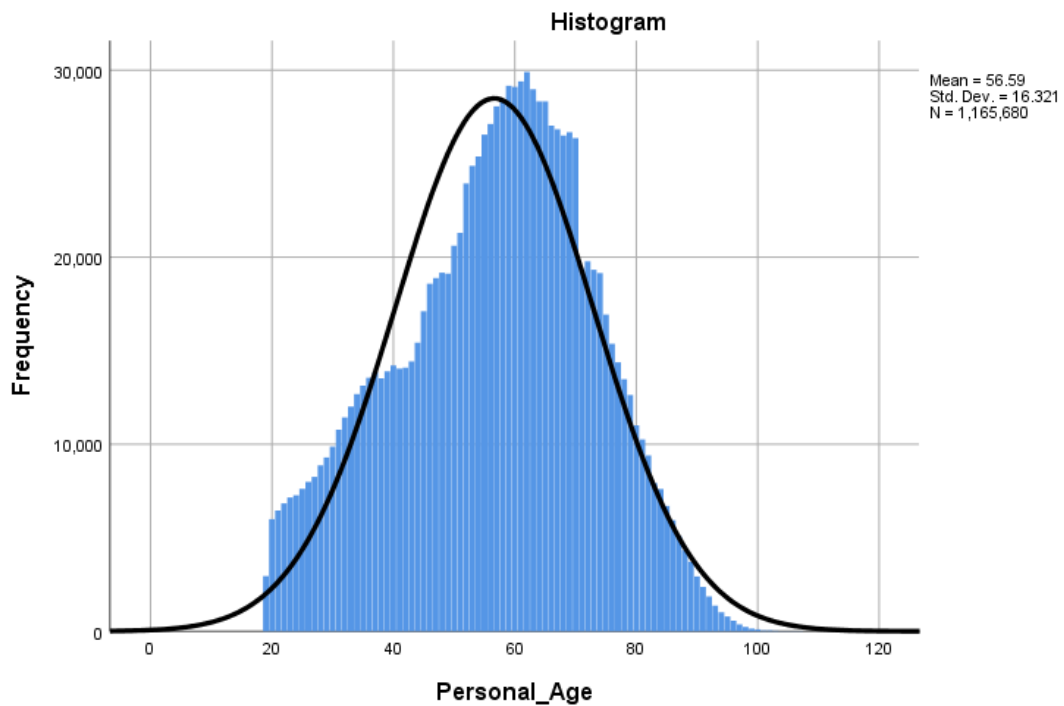
Appendix G. Age Distribution 12/10/2016 US SENATE RUNOFF



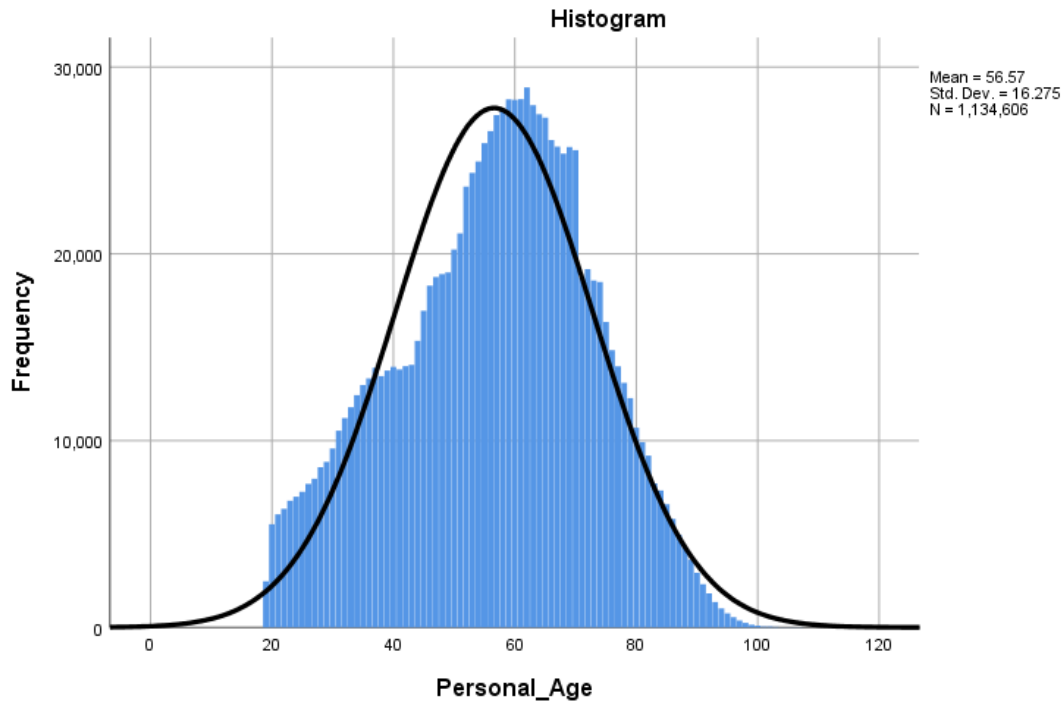
Appendix H. Age Distribution 11/08/2016 ELECTION US PRESIDENT



Appendix I. Age Distribution 11/21/15 ELECTION – GUBERNATORIAL RUNOFF ELECTION



Appendix J. Age Distribution 10/24/2015 ELECTION – GUBERNATORIAL PRIMARY



Appendix K. Table describing the average age of voters in each of the four elections of interest.

AVERAGE AGE				
ELECTION	EARLY VOTING	ELECTION DAY	TOTAL	VOTED
12/10/2016	62.7	55.2	56.7	893,123
11/8/2016	55.2	49	50.6	2,049,562
11/21/2015	60.1	54.2	55.6	1,165,680
10/24/2015	59.9	54.4	55.6	1,134,606

Appendix L. Details of the Four Consecutive Statewide Elections

Date	Top Ballot Races	Day of week	Type	Mid-Term	# of Voters	# of Early Voters	% Early Voters
12/10/2016	US Senate	Saturday	Runoff	No	893,129	182,993	21%
11/8/2016	US President/US Senate	Tuesday	Gen./Prim.	No	2,049,570	531,390	26%
11/21/2015	Gubernatorial	Saturday	Runoff	No	1,165,686	270,179	23%
10/24/2015	Gubernatorial	Tuesday	Primary	No	1,134,612	234,704	21%

Appendix M1. Example of output for binary regression model test of fitness used in dissertation.

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	26.175	7	.000
	Block	26.175	7	.000
	Model	26.175	7	.000

Appendix M2. This table compares differences in age turnout between election day voters and early voters.

	10/24/2016	11/21/2015	11/8/2016	12/10/2016
YOUNGER THAN MEDIAN AGE	<57	<58	<52	<58
ELECTION DAY	84.4%	82.7%	80.1%	86.3%
EARLY VOTE	15.6%	17.3%	19.9%	13.7%
MEDIAN AGE AND OLDER	57+	58+	52+	58+
ELECTION DAY	74.5%	71.2%	68.1%	72.8%
EARLY VOTE	25.5%	28.8%	31.9%	27.2%
AGE <65	<65	<65	<65	<65
ELECTION DAY	83.1%	80.8%	77.4%	84.5%
EARLY VOTE	16.9%	19.2%	22.6%	15.5%
AGE 65+	65+	65+	65+	65+
ELECTION DAY	71.9%	68.3%	63.3%	69.2%
EARLY VOTE	28.1%	31.7%	36.7%	30.8%

Appendix N. Notes from early discussions with dissertation chair about Louisiana Secretary of State data and survey data regarding demographics of Louisiana voters.

Dr. Day had a question about the frequencies and weighting of why some variables were weighted and others were not - I do not weight: education, income, marriage, Party ID because there are no such variables in the voter file to post-weight against.

I do not think it's abnormal that higher than median household-income voters vote at higher rates than do lower median household income voters. It's consistent with previous research. Also, previous research explains that people who have more education vote at higher rates than those with less education.

These over and under-representations that you've noticed are exactly the things I'm trying to discover in my research. We have the hard data on race, age, gender, and party registration, I am adding variables in my survey and dissertation to find out about those things that are not measured in the official voter file; marital status, education, hhincome, education and their relationships to voting behavior.

As the age categories go, this is the official data of the Secretary of State.

What I think happens is that some older voters are on an automated ballot mailing program and that their families fill it out and mail it in, even when the voter has died.

I called my local registrar in Tangipahoa Parish after you asked me about this in December. I analyzed the Tangipahoa Parish file for age and found a 121-year-old. This person hadn't voted since 1980 and was in fact deceased, but the purging algorithm overlooked it in previous voter roll purges. The difference is that the 121year old in Tangipahoa didn't vote in 2016, but as you point out, there are some centenarians who are voting. They are likely dead or are being "voted" by someone who receives an absentee ballot in the mail.

Since there are only 68 cases where the voter is over 102, and there were more than 2M cases in the 2016 election, I've decided to leave the official dataset intact. I don't have proof of why the anomaly occurs, other than what I've explained. I will explain it this way in my dissertation.

Appendix O. List of twelve consecutive statewide Louisiana elections.

Date	Top Ballot Statewide Races	Day of week	Stage	Cong Mid-Term	Number of Voters	Number of Early Voters	Percentage Early Voters
12/10/2016	US Senate	Saturday	Runoff	No	893,129	182,993	21%
11/8/2016	US President/US Senate	Tuesday	General/Primary	No	2,049,570	531,390	26%
11/21/2015	Gubernatorial	Saturday	Runoff	No	1,165,686	270,179	23%
10/24/2015	Gubernatorial	Tuesday	Primary	No	1,134,612	234,704	21%
12/6/2014	US Senate	Saturday	Runoff	Yes	1,285,505	234,548	18%
11/4/2014	US Senate	Tuesday	Primary	Yes	1,512,404	248,789	16%
11/6/2012	US President	Tuesday	General	No	2,014,530	362,271	18%
10/22/2011	Gubernatorial	Saturday	Primary	No	1,065,631	166,958	16%
11/2/2010	Lt. Governor	Tuesday	Special/Runoff	Yes	1,298,524	131,707	10%
10/2/2010	Lt. Governor	Saturday	Special/Primary	Yes	688,925	79,068	12%
11/4/2008	US President/US Senate	Tuesday	General/Primary	No	1,979,871	288,737	15%
10/20/2007	Gubernatorial	Saturday	Primary	No	1,318,068	141,209	11%

Vita

Anthony Licciardi, Jr. grew up in New Orleans, LA. He graduated from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, LA, with a B.A. in history and a minor in Spanish. Licciardi served as a city councilman in Hammond for eight years. He received M.P.A, M.A. and Ph.D. political science degrees from the University of New Orleans, where he honed his skills in public opinion polling at the university's Survey Research Center under the guidance of Dr. Edward Chervenak. Licciardi has taught university courses in American Government and Politics, State and Local Government and Politics, and specialty courses in Louisiana Politics. He is the son of Anthony Licciardi and Dr. Etta Sprinkle Licciardi. He is married to Christie Matheny Licciardi and has two sons, Cote and Gordon.